

COBALT-SERIES

谷  
瑞恵

# 伯爵と妖精

プロポーズはお手やわらかに

集英社



# Chapter 1 - Bridegroom of the fairy queen

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“Gee, it’s still a long ways to London .”

He was tired from all the running and slumped down to lie on the grass near the riverbank and mumbled with a sigh. It had been three days since he left Scotland , London was far away even with his speed which was his pride and specialty. “ Lydia , what was she thinking in going off without telling me?”

“ Lydia , what was she thinking in going off without telling me?”

And he heard that she was even hired as a fairy doctor in London and it would be quite some time before she was going to return, but he could only reply that she had to be joking.

He was told that the one who was holding Lydia back, was the Blue Knight Earl who was a human yet had an estate in the fairylands. Even he had heard of that name.

However, if it was the earl who had the power to have fairies yield to him, then there shouldn’t be any need to hire a fairy doctor.

At any rate, he was determined to get back Lydia , and so he galloped out of Scotland . That’s why he came all this way to England , where no one in his clan had stepped foot.

“I will definitely find her.”

Just then, he heard a singing voice from high up in the sky.

“A white moon, the queen’s white moon, a moon for the dear bridegroom....”  
Moon?

Curious, he lifted up his body and transformed into a beautifully handsome young man.

He called out to the small fairy who flew, fluttering from branch to branch

“Hey, young lady, you sure are in a good mood.”

“Good evening, Mr. Black Hair.”

“I’m trying to head to London , do you know if this is the right way?”

“Yes, you’re almost there. I’m also heading to London . To welcome our majesty

the queen's bridegroom."

"I'm happy for you all. So, what kind of moon were you talking about in that song you were just singing?"

"It is the real moon."

"Don't be kidding. There is no way you can get the real moon."

"We did obtain it. It even waxes and wanes."

"Wow, how rare. Let me take a look."

"Now, only just a peek."

Since the tiny fairy was in such a good mood, it didn't pay extra caution and pulled out a ring that had a milky, white shining 'moon' attached to it and handed it to him.

"Does it really wax and wane?"

"Of course."

"I see. You let me see such a wonderful thing. Thank you."

He smiled back at her as he handed back the ring.

"You're welcome. Now, I have to hurry on my way."

"Uh-huh, take care."

After he saw off the fluttering fae disappear beyond the top of the trees, he lolled out his tongue.

"What a dull-headed fairy."

He opened the palm of his hand and there was the 'moon' ring resting in his hand.



The place that Paul Foreman, who was wearing the best clothes he could rent, was stepping inside a place for the first time was a salon that was open to the fashionable social circles.

There were many remarkable individuals who were attending this exhibition held in this high-class club which was a common place for the upper-class society members to attend.

The numerous paintings that were being hanged up on display in the spacious hall were in the currently popular styles and were selected one after another by

the Royal Academy . All shared a central theme on being based on a romantic story, and the design of the early period of the Renaissance was delicate and graceful with a fragile beauty and was hailed as befitting to the reign of England 's beautiful Majesty the Queen.

However, there were also paintings from young painters who were unheard of. If one of their works was able to catch the eye of any of the ladies or gentlemen, then they could have a chance to step out into the world of art. So, because of that, Paul and his works that were just starting out were put in a brilliant frame prepared by the art dealer and was hanged out with the rest of them under the grand chandelier.

However, as of the moment, there wasn't any gentlemen who stopped to stand in front of his painting.

He was told that it was a little too simple and nondescript. He was well aware of the taste of the upper-class, but he wasn't able to change his style that easily. That's why he wasn't expecting all that much from this display.

More than that, Paul's attention was hooked onto something else inside the salon.

There was a young blond-haired man who stood out in the center of a crowd who were currently in a lively conversation.

He had the picturesque beauty that could blur over the beautiful men and women in the paintings. When he moved, the air around that area also moved. It was like the light was following where he was going, making the shadows move as well.

But it wasn't that that Paul had his attention on.

He reminded him of someone. It was like he was the future grown-up image of a young boy from his memories.

A young boy who had supposedly died.

"Paul, what are you daydreaming about. This is your chance."

The young painter snapped back into reality and finally realized that the young man his eyes were following was standing in front of his own painting.

The art dealer quickly pulled him. When the two of them came up to the young man, the art dealer spoke up in a deferential gesture like an art dealer would.

“How about it, my lord. Don’t you think it is a marvelous painting?”

The name of the young earl, who was the hot subject of the ton’s gossip, was Edgar Ashenbert. He was said to have returned from overseas just this spring.

“Indeed. Is this Titania?”

“Yes. The motif is the fairy queen from ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’.”

From the shadows of a primrose, the moon fairy was lying asleep. The earl’s eyes that were glued onto the painting looked as if he had fallen in love with her.

It wasn’t the power of the painting. Paul was surprised to learn that just having the earl gaze at it, it made the painting seem like it was starting to radiate a glowing light.

Just like how the earl’s softly fitting goatskin gloves, or the knot of his necktie, and even the sheen of his fine evening coat appeared like it was a piece of art. It even gave the illusion like there was the faint aroma of a flower that was drifting out from the painting.

That aroma was from a noblewoman who had approached them, but it was long before any of them could realize that it was so.

“Isn’t this theme a perfect match for my lord?” said the noblewoman wearing a blue dress.

The art dealer didn’t waste the opportunity to sell.

“Why, of course, the lord earl would know more about fairies than anyone in the ton. Even I, myself had chosen the best piece of work from the numerous paintings of fairies.”

And then, the art dealer turned around to look at Paul. He hurried to introduce him as the one who created this painting.

The earl who was said to run an estate in the world of fairies looked over to Paul and gave him a pleasant smile.

He was told that the young earl was only just past twenty. He was younger than Paul and yet those eyes of his that concentrated onto the fledgling painter appeared like that of a generous patronage.

He worried if it was the foolish attempt to try to win the favor of the earl. Though feeling a bit of diffidence, Paul was nudged by the art dealer’s elbow

and so he managed to give his greetings as best as he could.

“It is a pleasure to meet you. Lord Ashenbert.”

“Do you frequently do fairy paintings?”

“Ah, yes. I really like imaginative literature on fairies such as Drayton and Spencer.”

“Have you seen one?”

“Huh?”

He was being asked if he ever witnessed a fairy before. However, Paul was taken aback and confused if that question was a joke or serious.

His name, Earl of Ibrazel (Fairy world) was indeed romantic that it roused the interest of people, but Paul thought it was just a name. There were other peers who had titles to estates that didn't exist.

“My lord, it isn't nice of you to play fun with an innocent artist,” said the noblewoman.

“Why, my lady. Do you not believe in the existence of fairies?”

“If you saw you can see them, then I'll will say I'll believe them.”

“Yes, I've witnessed one. A fairy that possess ethereal beauty that no woman on this earthly plain can match that could cast a spell on anyone to captivate them. I wonder if I'm seeing a dream to be able to talk to someone like you?”

“How flattering.”

If the conversation of the two of them went on a roll, it seemed like they would forget that Paul and the art dealer were even standing right there next to them. The art dealer badgered him on from behind to hurry up and appeal his art more, but Paul was born an inarticulate man.

He wasn't able to find a moment to remark and was feeling lost but the earl turned his attention back to him like he suddenly remembered something.

“I would like to see some of your other works, Mr. Foreman.”

“Eh.....”

“Have you taken a liking to it?” Pushing aside Paul who had gone frozen at the unexpected turn of events, the art dealer clambered forward.

“Yes...., this Titania here, reminds me of a woman I fancy.”

“Oh, my, that sure is inexcusable. Is she your lover?”

“No, it’s my one-sided feelings.”

“Impossible, I couldn’t believe it.”

“It seems I’m not able to understand a woman’s feelings, so I quickly anger her.”

“There is no way you wouldn’t be able to understand a woman’s feelings?”

“It’s true, my lady. So much that I would be grateful if you would teach me.”

“If you are all right with me, then I would be more than happy to.”

Paul couldn’t guess if he really did take a liking to his art or that he was just using it as an excuse to woo the noblewoman, but he remained standing still as he saw the two of them walk off.

Paul thought that he reminded him of that boy. But, once he talked to him, his impression was completely different.

Of course he would be, there was no way that he could be that boy.



If you sleep under a grafted apple tree, or imp tree, fairies will capture and take you away.

If it was a beautiful young man or woman, then they have to be particularly careful when they pass under a tree. A fairy’s magic can make anyone fall asleep. If they suddenly felt drowsy and sat down by the tree trunk to take a nap, then most likely, they wouldn’t be able to wake up ever again.

And like that, those who disappeared are said to become the bride or bridegroom of a fairy.

“Long ago, there even was an ancestor of the Blue Knight Earl who had unthinkingly taken a nap under a grafted apple tree,” said Tomkins.

This butler of the Earl family was sitting behind a desk in one of the rooms of the earl residence and sealing one invitation after another that were stacked up on his desk.

When he said Blue Knight Earl, he meant the master of this house, the one the fairies called Earl Ashenbert. The name came after an ancestral figure who was called Lord Blue Knight.

For the present-day Britons, that name was only a figurative character from a fantasy novel that was written in the 16th century, but those who knew, knew

that figure was modeled after the earl family ancestor.

“And what happened after that?”

Lydia was also helping out with sealing the envelopes as she was enjoying a conversation about fairies with Tomkins.

“It was said that he was taken away to the beautiful fairy queen.”

The bloodline of Lord Blue Knight, who was said to possess magical powers as the lord of the fairy lands long ago, had perished. However, in Tomkin’s family who had served the Blue Knight Earl, generation after generation, they were episodes of the earl relating to fairies that were also passed down.

“Did the earl marry the fairy queen/”

“It seemed like he nearly had to make his vows. But the earl knew of a magical spell. Using that, he managed to be released and returned safely back to the human realm.”

“I know what that magical spell is.”

“Oh, is that true? Just what one can expect from a fairy doctor.”

Lydia was a young girl who was hired as a fairy doctor to this earl family.

A fairy doctor is a specialist in fairies and was able to see and talk with fairies. They even knew the traditional and proper way to socialize and deal with fairies that was nearly forgotten in the present-day 19th century.

From the very start, a fairy doctor’s job was to lend their knowledge of how humans and fairies should properly coexist and undertake the task of trading and bargaining with fairies.

Taking over after her deceased mother, Lydia had just started this job, and she was still an inexperienced fledgling, but she thought she had the motivation and pride of an expert.

“So, Miss Carlton, what kind of spell is it?”

“Oh, Mr. Tomkins, you don’t know it?”

“Yes, that part wasn’t pasted down in the story. And so, I have always been curious to what it was.”

“I’m also curious. Tell me too, Lydia.”

The voice that jumped in was Edgar, the current Blue Knight Earl. He strutted into the room and placed a piece of paper on the table.



“Tomkins, this is list of additional guests, all right.”

“Will this be everyone?”

“Most likely. Will the food preparations make it in time?”

“I will have it taken care of.”

Tomkins took the unreasonable challenge that was thrown at him by Edgar like he was picking up the gauntlet. Well, undertook, really. It seemed like he thought saying ‘I can’t do it’ would be like waving a white flag as a butler.

The Season had started and so every day in London there was a banquet party or ball held somewhere. It was natural that Edgar would come up with saying that he would be hosing a soiree, but the date he chose was much too soon.

But, Tomkins preparation was even more faster than that, so Lydia was surprised in awe.

“Oh, and yes, Lydia, you’re also one of my guests. There should be an invitation arriving to your father soon, so make sure not to forget.”

What, gasped Lydia, stopping to pause in her task of sealing the invitations.

“No, a ball is much too impossible for me!”

“Don’t worry, it isn’t just peers that will be attending.”

Even if he said that, if a middle-class member of society was going to attend a ball, then they were surely some wealthy family.

“And, besides, there isn’t going to be a need for acting formal. This isn’t a royal ball. Oh, yes, Duchess Masefield, you remember meeting her at the Opera house, right? The duchess said she wished to talk to you about fairies again. Now that I think about it, did you know that her husband, the duke was cousins of your father’s teacher?”

She didn’t know that. But when she realized it, a wall had been built up around her, not letting her the choice to refuse.

Even if her father was renowned as a scholar and accepted for his peculiarities, his daughter shouldn’t be allowed to act improperly in front of a peer member that was connected to him.

It was the usual ploy of Edgar.

“But, I don’t know how to dance.”

“Tomkins, when will the dance teacher be arriving?”

Huh?

“In the afternoon, today.”

“And, so, Lydia, there shouldn’t be any problems.”

There is a major problem!

Was what she really wanted to scream out, but with Edgar in front of her smiling like that, Lydia was left with her mouth open and lost the will to speak.

“For the mean time, it will be all right as long as you got the form. Because the only one who you are going to dance with is me. Oh, yes, you must not dance with any one other than me. Understood?”

“.....Why.”

“Because I’ll get jealous.”

He said it a matter of factedly, looking straight into her eyes, but Lydia could only feel like he was joking around with her.

Edgar was always like this any time of the day.

Of course, Edgar didn’t have any knowledge in regards to fairies even though he obtained the title of earl of the fairy world and there was a certain background to that matter.

That was why Lydia was forcibly hired as the private fairy doctor of the earl family.

The seventeen-year-old girl who lived in the outskirts of Scotland, couldn’t possibly refuse it after she received the official stamp of approval by her Majesty the Queen, and so, she finally had gotten used to having an office in a nobleman’s grand house and living in the great city of London in these past three months.

However, she still couldn’t understand what this earl was thinking what so ever. He would speak sweet, heart-melting words to every single woman he met. He was a man who use his gifted looks and with his calculative mind to play himself up to appear as appealing as he could.

Lydia was well aware that she couldn’t seriously take in those kinds of words of his.

She also knew that those words of Edgar that sounds so appealing to the ears was only just his means to get what he desired from people.

But, what she couldn't understand was where was the fun in pulling out a country bum like Lydia to a grand party.

If it was his wish to simply want to take around and show off a rare girl who was a fairy doctor, then it should be good time that he would grow tired of it.

"I wish that the moon spell would also work on you," mumbled Lydia under a sigh.

"Moon spell?"

"That's right, it's a spell that wards off persistent fairies."

"Miss. Carlton, it that the magical spell that was said to be used by the Blue Knight Earl?"

"Yes. To refuse the proposal of a fairy, you have to say 'Only if you would grant me the moon that continuously phases.' Since it is absolutely impossible, the fairies are left with giving up and going away."

"I see, since fairies are known for being loyal to the promises they make. So, our lord was also set free from captivity thanks to that."

Watching Tomkins nod in a deeply moved manner, she watched Edgar walk over to Lydia's side and leaned up against the desk. He gazed down to her and gave her a meaningful sly smirk.

"I'm persistent, so I won't give up that easily. I'll do anything I have to in order to present you with the moon."

It looked like he was a little annoyed at Lydia calling him 'persistent.'

".....I meant that you should only say that to your main love interest."

"You are my main."

You mean the woman who is in front of you at the time.

"That's why I'm a little curious, that would mean you had used that moon spell on someone before, correct?"

"Eh...."

Her heart skipped a beat at his clever intuition.

"You said you wished it would work on me as well. Who did you ward off?"

"A, a fairy."

"So, you were proposed by a fairy."

"It wasn't a real...."

“I feel like I was beaten ahead. So there was another man besides me who fell in love with you that much.”

“Yo-you’re wrong! It wasn’t like that, he was just a little strange fairy, you see, it wasn’t like he fell in love because of being a fairy, but more like he wanted to get his hands on a human.”



“Then, were there others?”

“Huh?”

“Men who fell in love with you.”

“Of course there wasn’t! They were all creeped out by me because I was always hanging around with fairies. I received something near a love letter from a boy only once. And that was only a dare that was going on in his group of friends!”

After she realized what she had blurted out, she became terribly embarrassed for honestly coming out with something like that.

There was no need to say what actually happened to him.

“Boys are inept at displaying their feelings. The only way they are able to approach the girl they like is by extending beyond a practical joke.”

Sure, there could be cases like that, but she couldn’t believe that it was the same in her case. Only, Lydia was amazed that Edgar didn’t laugh at her story.

She never spoke of it to anyone before as she thought it was a happening that people would find humorous. To those boys, it was just a light prank.

But, she was confused at herself for being relieved at not being laughed.

Edgar's ash mauve eyes looked straight at her gently but at the same time, lasciviously.

When their eyes met, she didn't know what to do and was perturbed. And yet, in the calm part of her mind, she reminded herself that he would use this same trick on anyone to deceive them.

Most likely, the reason why Lydia was able to remain calm was because she knew that he was originally a former criminal thief.

She imagined that he really knew that Lydia wouldn't be drawn to him however smooth he could talk.

That's why she felt there were times when there was something like a friendship that was bridged between them.

Or, was that just Lydia's imagination?

She realized that the butler had mysteriously left the room before she knew it, and he placed his hand to hold hers on top of the desk so naturally that she couldn't react in time to avoid it.

"But, you know, I actually want to thank the fact that there were only clumsy boys around you."

She tried to pull away her hand, but it was tightly gripped. But, it wasn't so tight that it was forceful, just barely gentle enough that it wrapped around hers.

Perhaps that could have been why Lydia couldn't really build up the strength to fight it.

"Lord Edgar, a package arrived from Mr. Slade."

The voice that interrupted was Raven's.

This brown-skinned young man worked as a servant to the earl family and was the servant that Edgar put his trust in more than anyone. From the time they were both in the underground life in America, he was loyal to the point that he would do anything if it was to protect his master.

Left with no choice, Edgar let his hands go of Lydia to turn over towards Raven.

"Raven, wasn't the first thing I taught you was to take the hint and play it



smart?”

Is that really something that should be the first thing to teach?

“Yes. However, the other day, you also said to help Miss Carlton whenever she was in trouble.”

I see, said Edgar as he furrowed his eyebrows. For one thing, Raven wasn’t telling a joke. Before he met Edgar, he was trained not to have any emotion and was said to be treated like a tool, so it must be difficult for him to take a hint.

“Which should I prioritize?”

“That depends on the time and situation. You have to adapt to the circumstances.... Oh, no, it’s all right, since you were able to decide that Lydia was troubled just now.”

Raven normally lacked facial expression, but the small blink he did appeared like he was relieved that he wasn’t reproached by Edgar.

“So, Slade you say....., ahh, that art dealer. Open it. It’s good timing. I was wanting to show it to Lydia.”

The thing that Raven placed onto the table was a faintly-colored fairy painting roughly about one foot 4 inches.

Despite herself, Lydia leaned it to look at it closer.

“My, how beautiful.”

“It was done by a young painter, but I took a liking to it.”

“Was the painter a woman?”

“Now, I didn’t mean the artist but the painting. I thought this fairy queen looked like you, so I wanted to keep it by my hand it at all costs.”

He turned to look at Lydia intensely again.

“There’s nothing about her that looks like me.”

“She does. She’s adorable and mystical, and if she were to open her closed eyes, I thought she was sure to have the same colored golden-green eyes as you. The beautiful Titania, she’s the splitting image that I have of you.”

There he goes again.

Lydia looked over to Raven helpfully. However, it looked like he decided that he was going to ‘take the hint’ this time. He avoided her eyes.

“I know, let’s have the painter make a painting with you as the model. It would

be the most fitting to hang in this house.”

“That’s impossible, no modeling.”

“You just have to sit in a relaxing position. It’s a great idea. If it was you in a painting, then you wouldn’t be angered if I kiss you, right?”

Edgar leaned his lips up against the sleeping Titania. Even if she didn’t think they looked alike, Lydia still became restless.

“St-stop it!”

She couldn’t hold back her plea.

“Why?”

“Stop saying things like we look alike and doing things like that. It makes me get weird ideas. And I don’t like the idea of having you do as you please to a painting of me!”

“It’s not like I was going to use it for an obscene reason.”

“Hu....., I-I never said something like that!”

“Were you imagining something more than a kiss?”

He was sure an absolute flirt for amusingly watching Lydia’s face turn bright red.

“Oh, I’m not your toy. Making me to learn how to dance and telling me to be a model, if you can’t give me the moon, then it’s all impossible!”

If the moon spell would really work, she wished that it would seal this man from spewing such nonsense. Oh, then, what a happy life she could lead.

However, it would never work on Edgar, as he was looking at her amusingly as he could be.

“Then, for the time being, let’s have you concentrate on dancing. Raven, you will be her practice partner.”

“What, I’m going to practice with him?”

“Since it was sudden, the teacher isn’t able to bring along an assistant. That’s why, Raven, you mustn’t get angry just by getting your foot stepped on.”

“Yes.”

Lydia timidly looked at Raven who replied humbly.

You have to be joking.

Raven was perfectly loyal towards Edgar, but he was merciless towards his

enemies. She was filled with unfathomable fear of practicing dancing with Raven after she was told that he was trained as a hardened killer.

It wasn't like he hated him as a person, but anyone would want to stay away from any possibilities that might spark the blood-thirsty killer in him that he said was difficult to control himself.

"Oh, Lydia, you'll soon understand that with human suitors, you'll be more happy by just giving up than try to drive away the persistent man."

It looked like the moon spell had the opposite affect on Edgar.

He's a little more mean than usual, mumbled Lydia as she sighed a breath.

Quadrille, Waltz and Gallop. Lydia was completely confused and struggling hard with the first steps of the dances she was learning for the first time.

Raven was like a wind-up mechanical toy in his precise steps, which made it all the more troublesome when she would just make one little mistake, that would throw her off-balance and nearly made them fall, hence she would naturally step and kick him an endless number of times.

"I-I'm sorry..."

".....It's fine."

He never uttered a word of pain, and he didn't show it in his expression, but in that small moment of breath, Lydia was sure he was angry.

But still, she wondered when and from whom Raven learned how to dance.

And, because she was thinking of something unrelated, she made another mistake.

"Oh, young lady, that's not right. The right foot goes first, and then turn."

The dance teacher who guided them as he played with a violin was a thin man. He spoke with an excessively high-pitched voice.

"Why don't we take a break. We can't have you get yourselves injured from getting hyped-up on your first day."

The one who was relieved at the teacher's suggestion was probably Raven more than Lydia.

Leading the teacher to the next room where drinks were prepared, Raven and him left the room, leaving Lydia to herself and she slumped down onto a chair next to the windowsill. A gray-haired cat appeared in front of her.

“Whoa, now, Lydia, what are you doing?”

He was a fairy cat and Lydia’s partner. He acted like a gentleman by wearing a necktie and stood on his hind legs on the spigot by the window and rested his hands on his hips, but he only looked like a cat from top to bottom.

“Can’t you guess by looking, I was dancing.”

“Hmm, I thought that you were taking a toll on that Mr. Raven.”

Instead of being angered at Nico’s wry comments, she grew depressed by thinking he was right.

“Nico, was I that horrible?”

“It was more like a lethal weapon than a dance.”

“.....Do you think Raven is angry?”

“Don’t be bothered. If it was a task ordered by the Lord Earl, then he would take it on even if it was torture.”

Isn’t it a little harsh to call it torture. Lydia glumly clamped her lips together.

“Uh....., excuse me.”

She thought she heard a small voice like the faint sound of a bell. She looked around to search for the source, but there was no one.

“Ah, I’d forgotten. Lydia, is the earl here?”

“I think he is, but what is it?”

“This young lady says she has business with the earl.”

Nico lifted up his fluffy tail to reveal there was a tiny fairy atop it. The fairy wore a sunny-yellow dress made of flower petals and combed her way through Nico’s gray-haired fur to come forward and bobbed a little curtsy to Lydia.

“It is my pleasure to meet you, Fairy doctor.”

“You’re a field flower fairy?”

“Yes, please call me Marygold.”

I get it, so she’s a spirit of a marigold.

“What kind of business do you have with the earl?”

“I was entrusted of a present by my master for the Blue Knight Earl. Could I please speak to the earl?”

From her polite attitude and the relief of hearing that she was a harmless fae species, Lydia nodded without giving it much deep thought.

“It may be best to ask the butler who is in the entrance hall. But, I don’t think you will be able to be seen by Edgar. Would you be able to transform to human form?”

“I am not very good at it.”

Even though she said that, Marygold’s body disappeared in a wink of an eye. Instead, there stood a small, young child who wore a flower-petal colored dress.

“Unfortunately, I’m not able to transform into an adult.”

With a five-year-old appearance, it seemed quite strange for her to be speak in such a courteous manner, but it couldn’t be helped since she was a fairy.

“I think that should be all right. Ah, I still have dance practice, so, Nico, you lead the way.”

The teacher and Raven came back into the room.

The fairy instantly turned back to her small form and grabbed onto Nico’s tail.

“Now, young lady, let’s continue the practice.”

Pressed on by the teacher, Lydia once again stood in front of Raven.

“Let’s first begin with a step of waltz.”

The teacher started to clap to a beat. Mixed by that rhythm, the tiny fairy’s voice reached her ears as she was about to leave with Nico.

“Ahh, finally, we will be able to welcome the Blue Knight Earl as our majesty the queen’s groom.”

What?

Long ago, there was a fairy queen who tried to marry the Blue Knight Earl.

Could that fairy be the messenger of that queen?

There was no way, but did they really be able to bring the moon as promised?

If so, and Edgar ends up accepting that, then it means he would have to marry a fairy.

Coming to that conclusion, Lydia panicked and her feet got entangled.

“Miss. Carlton, watch out.”

Raven grabbed ahold of her arm to try to steady her, but Lydia’s mind was preoccupied with thinking, so she instinctively got caught off guard.

She tried to push him away, but stepped on the hem of her skirt and went falling forward.



“Ahhh!”

She crashed into Raven and the both of them toppled over, making her completely squash him under her.

For one thing, since he was of Asian descent, he was much more smaller and slender than the average English man. The both of them masterfully fell down together.

“Oww....., ah, s-s-s, I’m so sorry, Raven. Clumsy me....”

She attempted to move off of him, but wearing a crinoline skirt and trying to get up was more complicated than it seems.

“Ahh, are the two of you all right?”

The teacher finally came up to them, but he apparantly wasn’t the dense type and didn’t offer his hand to help her up.

Just then, Raven’s emotionless face that was right in front of Lydia as she was fumbling around slightly changed with a lift in his brow.

She sensed the sharp sting of malice and in an instant there were goose bumps all over her.

Uh-oh, he finally lost his patience?

But, just when she thought that, Lydia’s shoulder was pinned down.

She saw a flashing image of Raven whipping his hand into his pocket and pulling out a knife. At that moment, she heard the railing voice of the teacher.

“Say your prayers, you dog of Prince.....!”

What? Why does the dance teacher know about Prince?

However, without given any moment to react, Raven forcefully shoved Lydia aside. He lunged towards the teacher and took a swift strike with his knife.

“Noooooo!”

What she heard next was the teacher’s scream.

More than the heated noise that came after that, the scream that Lydia let out from seeing what had dropped in front of her eyes could have been louder.

Momentarily, Edgar came running in with the butler, but at that point, the teacher was gone.

It looked like the teacher escaped from the window leaving his finger behind that was cut off by Raven.

I can't take it anymore, mumbled Lydia.

Ever since she came into the picture with Edgar, she was constantly fearing for her own safety.

If it was danger related to fairies, then her frame of mind could be prepared for that, but she didn't want to be involved with blood-running incidents.

To begin with, Edgar was in a position of escaping from a mysterious organization that had a man called Prince as its leader and it seemed like he was planning on starting a war with them.

As long as she was hired by the earl family, she wondered if things like this was going to happen over and over again.

The thought that, maybe, I should resign, crossed her mind, but this was a decent job as a fairy doctor.

Even if Edgar wasn't a real blood-related member of the Ashenbert family, there existed lands that were inherited by this earl family that still coexisted with fairies, so there was still some use for a fledgling fairy doctor like Lydia.

If she were to return to Scotland, she would be called a freak just like she had always been and would be waiting for job offers that may or may not come.

"Raven, so the teacher was targeting you."

"Yes, he called me, Prince's dog."

As he was thinking of something, Edgar crossed in front of Lydia back and forth again.

"What is the meaning of this?"

"They're most likely a group that are opposing Prince. They knew that Raven was with Prince in the past and thought it was part of his plan for Raven to come to England."

"Then, why don't you tell them that the two of you are also against Prince?"

"Could there be a chance to explain to people who would suddenly attack us? But, well, since they're a kind of group that's being left untouched by Prince, so they must not be that much of a threat."

"But, Lord Edgar, if they knew about me, then wouldn't they know about Lord Edgar as well?"

He stopped and turned things over in his mind.

“Yes, that could be so. Let’s take precautions, just in case.”

The headquarters of Prince and his organization who robbed everything from Edgar and captured him and turned him into a slave was America. More than anything, it was beyond the great Atlantic. It should take quite some time before they could determine Edgar’s location, and during that time, he obtained the title of Earl and established a steady social position in the social societies of England and made it so that no one could get their hands on him that easily.

Not only that, she sensed the hint that he was planning his revenge against those who had their hand in tormenting him, but for the time being, he was in a *joie de vivre*, enjoying the new life that he won.

Lydia hoped that they would keep that up and just forget their terrible past and revenge, but perhaps that was a difficult thing to ask for.

It was outrageous to have to be targeted by the enemies of their enemy.

Even if she was involved in a bloody confrontation, the reason Lydia didn’t bail out of here was probably because she was worried about their time ahead.

She wasn’t sure what else she could do to help besides her job as a fairy doctor, but since she was involved in making Edgar become the earl, she hoped that he would contribute and nurture the earl family line.

That would also be for the sake of the fairies who live on his estates, so she wanted to be of help to him.

As she was running that through her mind, Lydia realized that Raven had his hand bandaged.

“Raven, did you get injured?”

“I was just grazed.”

“Un, I’m sorry. It was my fault for weighing on top of you.”

If it was Raven, normally, he wouldn’t get himself injured when he was going against just one man.

Edgar gave her a glance.

“Weigh on top? Well, now..... I think I’d like be the practice partner starting tomorrow.”

Lydia imagined if she were to topple down onto Edgar, but that felt like something terribly ridiculous would happen and that made her hurry to reply.

"If-if it was you, then I wouldn't be able to practice calmly."

"Does that mean you're conscious of me?"

"Huh....? That's impossible! I hate how you have ulterior motives!"

"But, you know, I think that even Raven would have ulterior motives. Isn't that right?"

Raven, who was requested for a reply, thought for a moment, and earnestly responded with "Probably."

"So, how was she?"

"Ahh, jeez! What are you asking! Stop it already!"

Lydia turned red and rushed to interrupt them. Edgar snickered to himself and Raven was his usual emotionless self.

"Since it would be embarrassing for Lydia, tell me later in secret."

"Yes."

"Don't yes to that!"

They had just found out that they were being targeted and it should have been a serious situation, yet why are these people so care-free and upbeat?

Her mind was filled with disbelief.

Lydia again became confused as to why she was being hired by someone like him.

At that moment, the butler appeared with a message.

"My lord, I have news that the real dance instructor had been shoved down the stairs of his residence when he was about to leave and sprained his leg and sent word that it would difficult for dance lessons for quite some time. The messenger arrived with that message just now."

Ahh. Edgar let out a voice similar to a sigh of breath.

"So, it was deliberately calculated. Tomkins, choose a new dance instructor carefully and as soon as you can."

"Certainly. Another thing, there is a small, young lady who is asking if the earl is not available to see her yet."

"Oh, yes, I'd forgotten."

Lydia remembered and raised her chin up. When she remembered her responsibility as a fairy doctor, her feelings of Edgar being unreasonable

completely flew out of her mind.

“Marygold! I’d forgotten about her too. Edgar, have you met her already?”

“Oh, so she’s your acquaintance? I haven’t met her yet. Just when Tomkins came to notify me, we heard your scream.”

“Thank goodness! It was before you met her. Edgar, she’s a fairy. It seems like it’s going to be something troublesome, so I’ll go with you to see what she wants. And, one more thing, you must not, by all means, accept the thing it is she brought for you.”

He gave her a questioning look, but he still nodded. After he sat down onto the sofa, he told the butler.

“Bring the young lady here.”

Miss Marygold had completely lost her energy from when she first came in with high spirits, appearing in quite a depressed manner.

“Is she really a fairy?” whispered Edgar to Lydia.

“She said she couldn’t change to an older form than this.”

“Too bad. Unless she had ten more years on her, even I would be hesitant to court her.”

She doubted that. He seemed like the type to put on a good face even to an infant.

Just as she thought, he treated her fervent behavior as she politely greeted him like she was a lady and took her hand and sat her down on a chair.

“My lord, I was entrusted from my lady to bring you the promised gift. It was the thing you desired when my lady had asked for your hand in marriage in the past.”

“.....Marriage?”

Edgar couldn’t catch what she meant and so Lydia explained.

“She doesn’t mean you, but made the marriage proposal to one of the ancestor of the Blue Knight Earl.”

“Ahh, that story you were talking about with Tomkins. ....So it was true. Which means, Miss Marygold, is your good lady a fairy queen?”

“Yes. Her majesty is queen of the moon fields.”

“Is she pretty?”



“Oh, my, yes....”

What are you getting enthusiastic about.

Of course, if Edgar was indeed eager about it, then there wouldn't be a reason for Lydia to stop this marriage proposal at all.

“But, is the queen as small as you too? Then, that's difficult for me to get aroused.”

“Nothing to worry. There will be no need for that.”

“What, so your kind doesn't have that kind of thing? Then, there'd be nothing for me to enjoy.....”

“That's not the issue here!”

If she let the two of them talk, then things were going to get off-track. Lydia pinched his arm and interrupted the two of them.

“Marygold, when the promise was made with the queen, the earl should have asked for the ‘moon.’ Are you saying that you've brought the moon with you?”

“Yes. ....But it has....., been stolen!”

She burst out into wailing tears.

“Stolen you say? There sure are such evil miscreants. Young lady, would you please tell us of what happened? We may be able to be of some help....”

“Edgar, you keep quiet.”

Lydia snapped at him and turned towards the small girl.

“Return home to your queen. The gift that was stolen couldn't have been the moon. Because, the moon hangs in the night sky even now. That's why the earl will not marry your queen.”

“Oh, no. We really did obtain the moon. Are you certain to say that the moon hanging in the sky is the real one? Because the moon that our majesty had found truly does changes its phases.”

“How amazing. I would have liked to see it.”

Lydia was desperately trying to evade this and send her back and yet Edgar was carelessly opening his mouth.

“Yes, I would have loved to present it. We all believed that you would instantly take a liking to it and accepted our majesty's proposal. But....., before I knew it, it had been exchanged with something like this. Just now, I was going to take it

out to make sure of it as I was waiting to meet the earl.”

What Marygold took out, looked like an ordinary rock from any side of the road.

“I’m sure that he had stolen it. That awful fairy....”

“It was stolen by a fairy? Then, it would be impossible for us humans to get it back.”

As her shoulders slumped down in dejection, the small fairy nodded. Even if it was a fairy doctor who was an expert in fairy business, they couldn’t create the opportunity to intervene in a trouble that was unrelated with humans.

“I was stopped and talked to as I was heading on my way. Ahh, it was my fault to show the ‘moon’ at that time.”

It was a pity, but there was nothing she could do.

“Oh, Marygold, isn’t there any way you can return back to your kind?”

“I will be punished by her majesty.”

“But, there is nothing you can do if it was stolen. I’m sure she would forgive you.”

“Is there any way you can create another ‘moon’ like the one before?”

“Create? That was something extremely rare, made by the miraculous power of mother nature....”

She nearly spilled everything, but caught herself and quickly shook her head.

“No, the moon is the moon, there exists only one moon on this earth.”

“Hmm, but aren’t fairy queens known throughout the world under the names of moon goddess like Diana and Titania? If it was a fairy of the moon, then I thought that it would be easy for her to create a small little moon.”

“Her queen isn’t a fairy of the moon, but more close to a fairy of the moon shine. A group of small fairies like her kind are embodiments of the near-by field flowers or bugs or small animals and are personifications of something in the landscape. The highest among those fairies are usually a queen that represents the moon.”

“Oh, I see. How marvelous. So you are a lovely marigold, which means there are shamrocks and daisys as well? Or crickets and grasshoppers?”

Edgar went on and on in a terribly good mood.

“It might be difficult for you to return immediately, so why don’t you stay here

for a while? Lydia, wouldn't it be wonderful to have a fairy guest. She could make the excuse that she tried everything she could to try and retrieve the 'moon'."

Marygold lifted her tearful face up like she was a little relieved. She was a good-natured field fairy. Lydia decided that if it was something like that, then there shouldn't be a problem.

It was worrisome of how low Edgar's standards was against the dangers of fairies, but as long as he didn't accept the 'moon' then he shouldn't be taken away to the fairy land.



Since there isn't the 'moon' to be worried about. Out of nowhere, Nico plumped down onto the table near-by. Nico twitched his whiskers and then rubbed his nose.

"I feel something bad."

After he said that, he looked over to the small rock that was placed on top of the table.

"What is it? Is it about the fairy that tricked Marygold?"

"I'm not sure, but I have a bad feeling. And, besides, this rock has mold on it."

Mold, a rock that was in water.

Lydia also had a slightly bad feeling.

It couldn't be, she said to herself.

"My lord, what shall we do about the forgotten item of the instructor."

At the words of the butler who appeared, her mood went down even more.

What he left behind: four fingers. The sight of that which was burnt into Lydia's eyes, that unbearable memory flashed back into her mind.

"I'm sure he wouldn't come back to get it. Why don't we feed it to some stray dogs?"

Lydia saw the heartless side of Edgar in that instant, and in that moment, she had the dreadful feeling that everything was going to tumble to a bad direction, and she shook her head fiercely to shake that thought away.

## Chapter 2 - The disturbance at the ball

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Since the day that it was decided that they were going to be invited to the earl's ball at the Carlton residence, where Lydia lived, things were being frantically prepared.

They were so busy that she forgot about the where-abouts of the fairy queen's 'moon' and the organization that was fighting against Prince. There were no incidents after that and as a matter of fact, Lydia had forgotten about the bad feeling she had right after that.

She needed to quickly get a dress tailored and get ready matching shoes and gloves and hair dresses, and even learn and remember how to dance and rules of courteous behavior.

Lydia didn't have any dresses that were fit to let her attend formal settings in the first place.

When she went to the opera house and the noblewoman's residence which she was dragged to by Edgar, she wore the dresses that were prepared by the earl house staff. She was talked into accepting the reason to attending those places in that it was to have the fairy doctor who was privately hired by the earl family be accepted into society. She imagined that this upcoming ball was something similar to that, but her father, who was exerting himself for the sake of his only daughter, had corrected her in an unusually firm manner that since she was formally invited, she shouldn't consider it another extensional service of her job.

Lydia's father was a university professor and had pretty good ties with people in the upper-class, but he didn't favor glamorous social settings, so he didn't stick his face out unless it was an invitation from someone he couldn't possibly refuse.

But in this case, in order to not put his daughter through an embarrassing experience, it was decided that he was going to attend as well.

That's why, there was all the more commotion and disorder in the Carlton

house for doing something they weren't used to.

While they were doing this and that, the day of the ball came.

From the afternoon, Lydia's father went to the barber and cleaned and tidied up his usual straggly hair and was waiting for the tailor who was late as he repeatedly took off and impatiently wiped his spectacles.

Since there wasn't enough time, Lydia's dress could only be completed on the day of the ball.

In the end, it arrived in the evening, but the housekeeper of the Carlton house was able to skillfully aid Lydia her dressing and they made it in time.

The white mousseline de laine dress had cute cream-yellow ribbons attached to it. Delicately hand-knitted lace decorated the collar and skirt.

She had her hair, that was normally left running down her back, done up fashionably and charming like a young lady. After she decorated it with a freesia hair ornamentation and pulled up her gloves that came to her elbows, she was ready.

She was called by her father in the hallway and the housekeeper went out to respond, and as she made the last check-up of herself complete, she asked Nico who was by her for his impression.

"Nico, what do you think?"

"How would I know."

Nico yawned and stood up.

Nico was watching the humans scurrying about like he didn't care, but he was wearing a brand-new white, silk tie.

It looked like he was going to attend the ball as well.

"The tailor said white would be best if it was going to be my first ball. But, do you think it's a little too bright and uncomfortable?"

"It's all right, since you're young."

"If it's white, the tailor said we can reuse it by retouching it, and if I change the ribbons and lace, then it would be a new design any number of times."

"Are you planning to attend that many balls?"

"Formal dress for late soiree show your shoulders more than I expected."

"You aren't listening to me, are you?"

Rotating her body around in front of the mirror, Lydia checked her back.

“Hey, don’t you think the back is a little too revealing?”

“And you seem pretty excited.”

Lydia snapped back into reality.

“Wh-what are you saying. This is duty, just duty.”

“I think it is all right for you to enjoy this. This isn’t something that can be compared to the ball in the countryside, right? You would be able to brag about this to the country folk.”

That was right, a ball is every girl’s dream. Lydia was no exception.

There were balls held even in the countryside that was her hometown. They were small parties hosted by a middle-class family, but it was the subject of adoration of all the girls who had never left that country town.

However, Lydia had never gone to a ball. Since she was looked upon as an oddball, even if she were to attend the ball held in the small town where everybody knew each other, she figured she wouldn’t be able to enjoy it.

But the one she was going to go to today was a true ball. A ball that was like a fairytale or out of a dream, held for peers and aristocrats.

Her skills in dancing wasn’t near that out of a dream, but if she didn’t meet Edgar, this opportunity would have never arose. She decided she was going to enjoy the glamorous atmosphere to the best of her extent.

“You are right. It would be a waste not to enjoy it if I’m going.”

“But, really, you shouldn’t dance with someone you don’t know. You’re going to embarrass the man.”

Nico said that only because he had been watching Lydia’s dance practice, so her skills must be worse than she imagined.

The instructor told her she was fine, but she had the feeling that the muscles on his stretched smile was twitching uncomfortably.

“Then, maybe I should have Edgar reframe.”

That would be more relaxing for Lydia.

“Oh, why not the two of you dance. You should unload your frustration that’s been piling up on the Lord Earl.”

Nico remained standing on his hind legs and hit the air with his front paws like

he was punching someone with his fists.

What is that suppose to mean.

From the hallway, Lydia heard a voice calling for her. It seemed like her father still couldn't decide on a necktie.

Lydia called out to him that she was coming and pulled the hem of her skirt up a little.

She had to push down the crinoline that was under her skirt to puff it up so that she could pass through the doorway. That meant in order to move about in a formal dress, the doors of this house and stairway was too narrow.

"Oh, good lord, looks like you could nearly stumble inside the house and not be able to get back up," mumbled Nico, rolling his eyes around.

By the time they arrived at the earl house in the horse-drawn carriage, there was already an endless number of carriages with coat of arms on them parked in front of the palace entrance.

The ones that were getting out of those carriages were ladies and gentlemen who all dressed in fine and elegant evening ball wear. They entered into the earl palace entry way like they were being swept in.

Lydia and her father got off of their carriage and were guided by the servants into the line.

It was the hall that she was familiar with, but after it was covered with a new carpet and numerous lamps and decorated with flowers and clothes, Lydia felt like she might have wondered into a different world and moved her head about in a unladylike manner to look at everything around her.

From the entrance hall, the stairway lead up to the floor above as it curved in an arc. Once they walked up that, they entered the grand hall. The doors from the grand hall that connected to different rooms were all opened and the finely-dressed guests that had already arrived were all busily enjoying talking amongst each other.

Her father tapped her shoulder and when she finally turned her eyes back to him, she saw that Edgar was standing in front of them.

"My lord, it is an honor to be able to be invited to such a fine event."

"Welcome, Professor Carlton, and Miss Lydia."



When she was called like that, she was reminded that she came here as the Carlton daughter, not as his fairy doctor. Due to that different state of mind, she was supposedly used to seeing him, but when he showed her a smile, her heart jumped a beat.

“Good evening. ....Lord Edgar.”

She reminded herself that she couldn't speak to him in their usual friendly manner, but suddenly she felt a great distance grow in between them which was a strange surprise.

“Please take your time and enjoy yourselves.”

Only saying that, his eyes were taken off Lydia and her father.

He needed to welcome the invited guests that came in one after another and didn't have any time to spare on Lydia. She realized that it was impossible to get any more words out of him and surprised at herself who was apparently expecting to hear something more out of him.

When she was just about to step off to go, her arm was grabbed lightly. Like she was being handed a secret letter, Edgar sneaked a coral-pink rose into Lydia's hand.

“Wear it on the collar of your dress.”

He whispered that into her ear and it felt to Lydia like she was made to hold a secret from her father and when her father turned back to look at her, he swiftly hid the rose from his sight.

“Lydia?”

“I-it's nothing, father. ....I thought I should maybe go get something to drink.”

“All right, I'm going to go greet the Duke Masefield.”

Leaving her father, Lydia mingled into the crowd of people and let out a breath of relief.

“Why do I have to be so panicked?”

It was normal for Edgar to act like he had feelings behind his actions.

First of all, to be told to put a rose on her dress collar, maybe that meant that her dress was too simple and needed more décor.

Once again, she took a look at the people around her and saw that all the women wore glamorous and brilliant dresses. The dress she thought was

wonderful at her house did indeed seem bland once a weed flower like her was among a field of elegant large-blossomed flowers like them.

Using a window as a mirror, she tried to slip the rose, which had all its thorns removed, into her collar.

Since she didn't have any extravagant jewelry adorning her dress, having a flower dress-up her empty collar-area might make it more pleasant to the eyes. Arranging the frills that ran along her collar, Lydia felt like a pair of eyes were looking at her and lifted her head up. A number of woman looked casually away in the other direction, or maybe that was a figure of her imagination.

Is there something odd about me?

She tried to look for any sight of her father, but then spotted Raven waiting as a server. He walked over to Lydia and held out a glass.

"Care for any refreshments?"

"Oh, thank you..... Uh, Raven, is there something weird with my dress?"

"I don't know," he replied immediately.

Looks like she asked the wrong person.

"I'm sorry, I made a mistake. You look extremely beautiful."

".....Edgar told you to say that?"

"Yes."

How is it that he can say yes.

To this off-tune exchange of words, there was the chuckling sound of laughter near-by.

"It isn't at all strange."

The one who said that was a man who just happened to be standing right by them.

"Well, I am not the right person to ask about that. Since it is the first time for me to attend such a ball."

His eyes showed that he was a gentle person.

"The Earl Ashenbert was friendly and invited me and so I came, but I'm worried that I'm out of place."

He pinched the end of his worn-out evening coat.

It seemed Raven was busy as he went off to continue what he was doing, but

Lydia felt something familiar with this man who said it was his first ball and was able to make a smile naturally.

“It’s also my first time.”

He gave an obvious impression like he was an honest and good-willed young man. His light brown curly hair was let out to grow naturally but it appeared to Lydia’s eyes like he didn’t seem like the pretentious type.

He didn’t seem to be from the upper-class and if Edgar had directly talked to him, then he must be someone that he had taken a liking to.

“But, young miss, everyone has their eye on you. Don’t you have a promise to dance with the earl?”

“Eh?”

He pointed at the rose that was pinned in the collar of her dress.

“It’s the same as the one Earl Ashenbert is wearing.”

Now that she thought about it, Edgar’s buttonhole was also this flower.

“This flower is gathering all the envious eyes of the young daughters and ladies. The gentlemen in the room may also be watching as well. Even if they wanted to ask you for a dance, they must feel ashamed. If you only had eyes for the Earl.”

Was that what this meant?

Then I won’t be asked by anyone.

It wasn’t like she wasn’t hoping that she wouldn’t be asked for that kind of thing.

She was a little hopeful that a dream-like occurrence of having each other’s eyes meet and be drawn together to want to hear each other’s voice might happen.

She thought of throwing away this rose. But if she was asked and did dance with the fellow, then she might embarrass him. Edgar may have anticipated that and came up with this idea.

He must not want the ball that he was hosting to turn into a disaster.

Lydia let out a sigh, thinking that reality was much more harsh than she imagined.

Anyhow, the feeling that she had of people staring at her was because of this

flower.

“Um, I am acquainted with the earl, but, it’s not like that. Because I’m not good in dancing, he must have done this so that I wouldn’t have to dance.”

“Not good at dancing? So am I. Since I can’t dance, I’m able to speak to you since it wouldn’t be taken as rude not to ask you for a dance.”

When Lydia chuckled, he also smiled.

“Oh, I’m sorry, I didn’t introduce myself. My name is Paul Foreman. I’m a beginning painter.”

“Are you, perhaps, the one who painted that Titania?”

“Have you seen it? Oh, then it might have been better if I didn’t say my name.... Women tell me that I didn’t fit what they expected from the image of the painting. It seems they think of me as the vulnerable and sensitive type.”

“No, not at all. I always wanted to meet you. Ah, my name is Lydia Carlton.”

“Miss Carlton, do you like fairies?”

More like she could see them and hear them and was meeting them everyday, than like.

But if she were to say something like that, then even this fairy painter would think her as weird.

“Oh, yes.”

She didn’t want him to be scared of her, so she didn’t say anything more than necessary.

“Fairies and gods from mythology are all sources of imagination to me. Since I’ve never seen them before, I’m able to create them freely in my imagination.”

“But, since there are people who have seen them before, wouldn’t you think that the existence of fairies has spread word throughout society.”

“Oh, yes. Because people have the mind’s eye, they are able to see what doesn’t appear to their eyes.”

“Mind’s eye, yes, I think so too. That’s what’s needed to see fairies.”

It was just a simple conversation, but Lydia felt happy, like she was understood by somebody.

Since he liked to paint fairies, perhaps, she thought, that he might even accept it when she told him that she could see fairies.

Before she had realized it, the orchestra was over in playing the prelude. The people in the hall started to move about. In the center, couples ready to dance gathered.

“There’s the earl. He surely does stand out.”

Lydia was also able to spot him right away. His blond hair that shined and sparkled above anything else, gathered more people’s eyes under the chandelier light.

Of course, he needed to ask all the upper-class daughters and ladies of the distinguished guests, so in reality, he really didn’t have the time to be dancing with Lydia.

She was fine if they weren’t going to.

While she was watching everybody, momentarily, a new dance started along to the rhythm of a quadrille.

As they danced in a line, the partners would change and the young girl who was being escorted by Edgar and during the short period of time she needed to leave his side and held the hand of another man, she didn’t have her eyes leave him as they were gazing heatedly at him.

Lydia was a little envious.

“It looks like fun.”

“Would you like to dance?”

“Eh, but....”

“If it’s this dance, it seems easy enough. And if we make a mistake, I’m sure it wouldn’t stand out that much.”

He was right. That’s why it seemed like so much fun. The dance that Lydia had trouble with till the end was the steps of the waltz and the minuet.

“If you aren’t going to only dance with the earl that is.”

It was a waste not to enjoy anything. As Lydia thought that to herself, she nodded.

“Um, Mr. Foreman, please go easy on me.”

“You can call me Paul.”



Sitting himself down on the stone hand railing that lead to the garden with a

glass of scotch in one paw, the fairy cat Nico was humming a tune to himself. The music that was being performed by the orchestra could be heard from here clearly enough. And yet the noise of activity and gossip of the crowd was far away and it was quiet. Basking in the light of the crescent moon that hung in the night sky and sipping the good spirits and picking and tasting the caviar and smoked salmon, made Nico have a terrifically good mood.

To tell the truth, he preferred a whole freshly-caught fish after it was deep-fried more than fish roe or thinly cut fish slices, but he didn't mind this either.

The small fairies that had gathered from hearing the music were all dancing by the fountain and tree trunks.

Even the Carlton house hobgoblin was there.

"Mister Nico, the earl's ball sure is magnicicent."

Fluttering her honey-golden wings in a hurry, Marygold hovered around in the air above Nico.

"The ear himself is such a wonderful man. If he were to come to our majesty's side, then our land would surely become even more prosperous."

"Hey, hey, you still haven't given up yet. It's impossible to take the earl back with you."

"If I had that 'moon' with me, then he was sure to have consented."

"But, the man that your queen fell in love with isn't him, you know. He's just a man who inherited the family name and yet you all are all right with that?"

"Why, if they have the same name, then there isn't much of a difference, is there? Since human lives are so short, I have heard that they pass on down the line through their blood and name."

But, he doesn't even share the same blood. Even though he thought that, he kept quiet.

Long ago, the human that was the closest friend with fairies was Lord Blue Knight. As his descendants, the ones with the name of Blue Knight Earl must still be someone special amongst the fairies, so it was no wonder that their fairy queen was so clung on to getting him.

To tell the truth, Nico actually didn't mind if this Marygold took away that criminal to the land of their fairy queen, so that Lydia would be released.

At this rate, by her remaining as the fairy doctor of the earl family, there was going to be the possibility that Lydia was going to be involved in the unknown war that was behind Edgar.

But, Lydia was somewhat pitying Edgar. She was deceived and used a number of times, and even when she was made to do what he wanted her to do, she ended up pitying him for having such a sad past.

Be that as it may, that was Lydia's personality, so it couldn't be helped.

If Edgar were to put in a situation where he was nearly taken away to the fairyworld, and it that was not his wish, then she was sure to do something to help him.

Because of the responsibility as a fairy doctor, she would do any reckless thing.

"Tut, then that means we'll be living in London for a while."

Just when he mumbled that, the small fairies in the garden suddenly began to murmur in nervous voices.

The fountain water burst up in exploding waves. The surface of the water that circled around the bronze statue of the mermaid rose up like a black mountain.

In the next moment, the area around them was filled with a sinister touch of wind.

Marygold hid herself behind Nico's tail and Nico rushed to jump into the bushes.

What appeared from the splashing waters of the fountain was a magnificent ebony, black horse.

"K-kelpie...."

Nico couldn't help but gasp in surprise and then quickly covered his mouth with his paws.

Lifting up his rear, the kelpie kicked away the fairies that hadn't yet escaped with its hooves, and shook its saturated mane, making the water droplets making it shine and sparkle, then lifted up its head to look up at the building.

"It-it's him, Mister Nico. He's the one who stole our majesty's 'moon'."

"What, really?"

"He had a human form then, but I won't mistake those black pearl eyes."

This is bad. Extremely bad.

As Nico became more and more nervous, he shifted his attention to his whiskers that were standing out straight.

Since the first time he saw the rock that had mold growing on it, he had been having a bad feeling. He didn't think that the aquatic horse would leave the familiar waters of its home and come all the way to London, so he denied that possibility.

However, he was a different character than the normal aquatic horse. Normally, they would only see humans as prey, yet he followed Lydia around after growing an interest in her.

He apparently was influenced by his even further oddball younger sibling who took a human wife and relentlessly asked Lydia if she would become his bride.

While Nico was trying to figure out what to do, Kelpie changed into his human form and started to climb up the stairs that continued up to the hall where the lively ball was being held.

".....Oh, no, I need to let Lydia know."

Nico finally moved his frozen body. He climbed up the near-by tree and jumped over to the window on the second floor to scramble into the hall that was brightly lit-up by the gas lamps before Kelpie.

The dance music quickly changed from one to another. From the beautiful music of the violin that streamed across the air of the room to the bouncing tune of the clarinet to the calm melody of the cello solo.

Walking away from the ring of those who were dancing and stand talking as she listened to the music was actually quite enjoying for Lydia.

She introduced Mr. Foreman to her father and just when the talk was livening up between her and the Duchess who said she loved to hear about fairies, her eyes spotted a gray-haired cat that bobbed and weaved through the legs of the crowded people on his hind legs.

Oh, Nico, he's completely forgotten to be a cat in front of people and walk on all-fours.

Luckily no-one was looking towards their feet so it looked like no-one had noticed, but Lydia swiftly walked over to Nico.

"Lydia! I'm been looking for you! Something's come up, that ke....."



It seemed like he was in some sort of panic, but Lydia picked Nico up as it seemed like he was going to continue talking in his upright position.

“Hey, what are you doing, Lydia.”

“Don’t talk like that in this crowd.”

There would be a commotion if people found out that a cat was standing on its hind legs and talking.

She carried Nico in his dangling state all the way to the balcony and lowered him down as she hid in the shadow of the curtain on top of the hand railing.

“Don’t be so unreasonable.....” grumbled Nico in a bad mood, as he fixed his fur that had become ruffled. He was a fairy cat that took caution in his looks above all else. While he was at it, he fixed his necktie as well.

“More importantly, what was the matter?”

“Right! He’s here, that guy.”

“He?”

“You know, him, the one that stole Marygold’s ‘moon’.”

“You found out who was the culprit?”

“No, I meant he was the one who....”

“Lydia! There you were.”

Before Nico could finish, there was another voice that interrupted them.

From the neighboring balcony, a man was leaning out towards their direction.

From the light of the lamp, his black wavy hair was lit-up. He had a mystical, breath-taking good looks, the sort of beauty and fine features that couldn’t be born from a human. Tall with a strong, well-shaped body.

Of course, all of that was very familiar.

“Ke-Kelpie!”

He was the fairy that would periodically pay a visit to her Scotland home.

Originally, he was an aquatic horse that lived in the Highlands. However, he was an oddball that came all the way to the town near Edinburgh where Lydia lived and took up residence in the near-by river.

They were a species that naturally won’t communicate their thoughts with humans. They were an Unseelie court that would use their devilish good looks to trick humans and drag them into the waters to eat them.

However, this kelpie would come to Lydia's country home and just spend his time arbitrarily and so she only thought of him as someone like a slightly impudent friend.

Even if he was a devilish aquatic horse, he wasn't all that dangerous once he left the river and when it pertained to him, she saw him more out of curiosity as a fairy doctor than of his true nature as a man-eater.

However, while Lydia was allowing him to visit her home, he must have grown tired of coming up onto the land and started to tell Lydia to come into the waters with him. Kelpie would light-heartedly invite her to live with him as he didn't know of the ordinary morals of human life, so when she told him the spell that 'she would if he would bring her the moon,' he didn't appear before her for a while.

Leaving in that state, Lydia came to London and the days she spent here all rushed by and so she had completely forgotten about Kelpie.

But, even though, he didn't have to choose to appear at a time like this.

"I've come for you. Let's go back home to Scotland."

Kelpie leaped for to the balcony they were on like he was as light as a feather.

"Ho-How did you know where I was?"

Lydia braced herself.

"The hobgoblin in your house told me. Because you are hired by the Blue Knight Earl, you won't be coming back for quite a while. So that's why yours truly here came all this way for you."

She did hear from her father that he sent a letter to an acquaintance of theirs to manage their empty home while they were away. The rumors of the oddball Lydia being hired by the even more oddball named earl must have spread throughout the town by now.

Hobgoblins loved gossip and rumors much more than humans. In order to drive away the kelpie that they disliked, it must have been more than happy to tell him that Lydia was staying in London.

"I have a job here. So return home by yourself."

But, the kelpie wasn't listening. He was rudely inspecting Lydia with his confused and curious eyes.

“Why are you dressed up so weird like that?”

This happens to be formal wear.

The one who wasn't dressed for the occasion was Kelpie. Since he was a fairy, nothing could be done, but when he wore that loose, tunic-like piece of shirt and trousers like he was some sort of sheep herder from the hilly fields, then it made him look like a man intruding on someone else's property.

For the time being, Lydia decided in a panic that it was best to hid him away from people's eyes. However, Kelpie didn't realize the situation and thoughtlessly pulled up her skirt to look into it.

“What are you doing!”

In reflex, she gave him a hard slap of her palm. At least, Kelpie let go of her but she was sure that her action didn't give him much damage.

“You're as brutal as usual.”

“I don't want to be told that by a savage kelpie.”

“I just wanted to know what was inside.”

“This is this kind of dress!”

“Miss Lydia, did something happen?”

The one who spoke to her as he came out to the balcony was Paul Foreman.

He must have seen the two of their behavior just now and thought that a suspicious intruder was doing something unlawful against her.

He slipped himself between Kelpie and Lydia.

“Who may I ask you are? You don't seem to be one of the guests and if you came in without permission, then I think it would be best if you quickly leave. Or else, I will have to call the guards.”

Kelpie made an irritated look as he knit his manly brows.

“He's the Blue Knight Earl? Lydia, you're being worked around by this weak excuse of a man?”

“You're wrong, he isn't the earl... More than that, don't say something so rude!”

Paul turned around to look at Lydia in surprise.

“Miss Lydia, he is your acquaintance?”

“Uh....well, yes....”

“Oh, what, so he isn't the earl. Then don't get in our way.”

Kelpie pushed Paul aside and pulled over Lydia's arm.

"More importantly, Lydia, I found the moon. Now you'll be mine."



What? Lydia let her mouth hang open but snapped back into reality when Nico tugged hard on her skirt from behind.

Oh, right. Marygold had said that he was the one who had stolen her 'moon.' She remembered that she mustn't accept it at all costs as she slapped away his hold.

"Don't be ridiculous. The moon is hanging above us this very moment."

"Oh, just take a look. It's the moon and it even changes its phases."

On the palm of his hand that he opened, there was a ring that had a milky white stone attached onto it, but Lydia turned her eyes away.

"No thank you. It could never be the real thing."

"Don't say that and just accept it."

"No!"

Kelpie tried to force it onto one of Lydia's fingers.

"I told you I don't want it!"

"Stop it, young man....."

Kelpie started to struggle with Paul who stood to guard Lydia.

"I said don't get me my way, you little,"

"Can't you see she doesn't want whatever it is."

"Shut up! ....ah."

Just as Kelpie uttered in surprise, he completely stopped.

Huh? Said Paul and lifted up his hand in shock to see that he was wearing the ring.

"Hey, what are you doing, I don't have any interest in you! Give it back!"

"....It's not coming off."

"Whaat? Then I'll bite off your finger."

"Whaat!"

"Stop it already!"

Lydia desperately tried to push Kelpie back.

But things were already out of her control. The guests who noticed the commotion they were making had already gathered to make a circle around the doorway to the balcony.

"What is all this commotion?"

It was Edgar. He walked over to Lydia and looked over to Kelpie who was grabbing ahold of Paul by the neck of his shirt.

"Would you mind letting go of my precious guest."

Paul whimpered "My lord" but he was tossed aside by Kelpie who stood to face Edgar.

"So you're the Blue Knight Earl."

"Lydia, who is this?"

The way he asked Lydia instead since he had no intention of having a conversation with someone who wasn't invited was just the derogatory attitude of a noble.

But, most likely, that didn't communicate with Kelpie.

"I am the much feared, great ke..."

Lydia planted his elbow with all her force right into Kelpie's stomach. While he was catching his breath, she spoke up in his place.

"K..., Kain is his name!"

If word spread out that he was the aquatic horse, kelpie in full view of everyone

then there was sure to be absolute chaos.

“So, Mister Kain, do you have business with me?”

“Business? Oh, yes, I came here to take her back to Scotland. It’s an awful thing you’re doing by leaving her in this dump of a place called England.”

“Well, let’s see, there indeed is an overwhelming number of things here that you can pretty much throw away, but I’m sure back at your home, people must pick up and take anything that’s thrown out.”

Even at this, Kelpie realized that he was being ridiculed.

“Why you little...!”

His strongly built arm reached out to grab ahold of Edgar’s neck.

But Edgar remained as he was, without batting an eye and didn’t show any signs like he was going to evade his assault. The one who stopped Kelpie’s arm was Raven.

He was a slender and Asian man with a baby face, but he silently glared at Kelpie with his penetrating eyes that resembled a raptor bird. He pushed back the savage aquatic horse’s power with his own power.

“Hah, as you would expect from the Blue Knight Earl. You’re keeping such an tremendous thing as your servant.”

She wondered if the blood-thirsty sprite inside Raven was able to be seen by Kelpie.

He narrowed his black pearl eyes and stepped back.

“I’m at a disadvantage on land. Lydia, see you later.”

With that Kelpie twisted his limber body around and jumped down towards the ground from the balcony.

While everyone in the crowd let out gasps and screams of surprise, he jumped into the water of the fountain.

Everyone thought that his body sank down into the supposedly shallow pool of water but then he immediately rose up again in the form of a ebony black horse and sprayed about a shower of water droplets like the rain as he reared back and neighed, then disappeared under the water surface.

The guests of the ball were aghast and dead quiet at seeing such a shocking sight.

What'll we do now, thought Lydia as she was looking down from the hand railing of the balcony and couldn't bring her head up from fear.

She remained frozen but felt Edgar beside take a deep breath.

"Uh, Edgar....."

"It's all right, just keep smiling," he said then turned to face everyone.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I apologize for the commotion. It looks like we have fairies mingling among our family ball. If you spot horns or wings on your dance partner, please be careful so that you are not taken away to their world."

Once he gave them a smile, a stir swept through the anxious crowd as they erupted into an applause.

Lydia heard the guests remarking what a wonderful performance that was.

I wonder what kind of contrivance they used?

Was that black-haired man from the circus?

Or maybe he was a magician?

But the earl is lord of the fairyland, it could have actually been a real fairy.

As they whispered amongst each other, they returned into the hall again as they were lead into by the sound of the music, making the ball flow on again like nothing ever happened.

"Paul, are you injured?"

Worried by Edgar, Paul finally came to his senses and stood up straight. He fixed his necktie that was ruffled because Kelpie had grabbed it and messed it up and shook his head.

"No, I'm fine."

"I'm sorry you had to go through such an unpleasant experience."

And then he turned to Lydia.

"Let's dance."

Edgar already seemed like he was also unaffected by what just happened as he held out his hand to her.

"As we promised."

"Y-Yes...."

They passed in front of Paul who looked like didn't understand the extent of what happened and wanted to ask questions and as she heard Nico whisper to

her “Good luck,” Lydia walked out into the hall.

It seemed a polka song had just ended and when Edgar led Lydia onto the floor, people’s eyes all gathered onto the girl who wore the same rose flower and she didn’t have to look around herself to check that.

“Next is a waltz.”

To try a waltz so suddenly, this was going to be quite an obstacle.

“Edgar, it might be better if we didn’t....”

“You can dance with Paul, but not with me?”

Looks like he noticed.

“It’s not like that. I’m just saying that I might embarrass you. You went through the trouble and calm down the situation back then, but because of me again....”

His ash mauve eyes gazed at Lydia as he peered down at her. He looked angry like he couldn’t believe what she was saying.

“There is no way that you would embarrass me.”

Their hands overlapped and his hand wrapped around her waist, which was to wait for the first sound of the waltz. But, compared to the other couples, Lydia became worried if they might be standing too close to each other.

When she tried to lean back, he didn’t relax the power in his arm.

“...If you’re too close, I’ll step on your foot.”

“Go ahead.”

“I might bang into you and knock you over.”

“I’ll catch you so we’ll be all right.”

“Didn’t you hear from Raven that my dance was like a weapon or torture?”

“I heard you were soft and smelled good.”

“Huh.”

“I’m wishing that you would run into me too.”

“.....Raven wouldn’t say something like that.”

“Uh-hum, it’s just my imagination. You smell like freesias tonight.”

He would chuckle like usual at Lydia who turned red, but right now his gaze seemed more seductive than usual.

Their hands that were held and their bodies that were pressed together wasn’t for the sake of dancing but more like a harbinger for them to spend a sweet



time together which was still difficult for Lydia to imagine.

For a moment, the hall went silent, and then a violin's one phrase ringed throughout the air.

Like a sign, Edgar pulled Lydia's body against him and glided into the first step.

They carried on like they were leaning up against the melody of the violin and

Lydia was surprised herself that her body was moving naturally.

It was because Edgar cleverly led Lydia.

It was the sensation like both of their breathing matched. It was as if she tightly tied to the music and him, like they had become one.

"You're doing great."

".....This isn't usual. It's because you're a good lead."

He put his strength in holding his arm around her back as they twirled around in a circle. She felt they were doing splendid and glorious as the hemline of her skirt was carried up as it swung through the air and she was surprised at herself for being able to make it appear like she was smoothly stepping through all the dance steps.

"Lydia, just like this, we're able to beautifully make up for one another anytime. Don't you think so?" he whispered at a close distance where his lips nearly brushed against her ear.

Lydia was able to closely view his golden hair up close and that unwillingly raised her heartbeat.

But this wasn't the result of her practice but Edgar's technique. Whoever was his partner, he was able to make the two of them appear like they were dancing perfectly.

He knew that the people around them and the young girl in front of him wouldn't be able to take their eyes off of him like that.

"What are you planning now?"

Because half the reason he spoke such meltingly sweet words was to successfully manipulate Lydia. She learned that by now.

The other half was just simply his character.

That should have been the truth, yet he went quiet with a look like he was disappointed.

He pulled her body tight against his. Because they went around in repeatedly large circles, Lydia nearly went dizzy.

He was leading her more roughly than how he was just earlier. She was just barely able to keep up with him and just when she thought her legs would give out and get tangled, Edgar abruptly stopped their dance.

Before she knew it, they had entered and were standing in the back of the greenhouse that was connected with the great hall.

They could hear the music but the humidity and noise of the crowd from the hall must have been blocked by the thick plants making the area around them be filled with silence. The air in the room felt slightly arid and cooler.

Unlike the room where the chandelier brightly lit-up everything, the lamps in the hallway that were placed with some space between them and the moonlight that shown through the transparent glass ceiling was able to relax her a bit.

“Let’s take a little rest.”

She was breathing hard, like she was been running in a race. Lydia calmed herself by sucking in a gulp of air which carried the aroma of a southern tropical country.

Edgar led her to sit down on a bench and remained standing as he stared down at her. She was a little worried about the chest area of her dress style that she wasn’t used to wearing.

“That dress, it looks beautiful on you. You look like a chiffon cake.”

“Is that a compliment?”

“Yes, you look delicious.”

While she was thinking up how she should retort to his usual foolish behavior, Edgar combed up Lydia’s reddish-brown hair that he described to be a caramel color and planted a kiss on it.

“Since the moon is watching, I’ll have to bear with just some caramel.”

His ash mauve colored eyes appeared like they glowed with a passionate red, but that must have been the large ruby that pinned his necktie.

And yet, she thought that they were showing the color of his heart and that made her more dizzy.

“You’re beautiful, Lydia.”

Lydia breathed in and out deeply to try to keep herself calm.

“.....How many have you told that tonight.”

“About twenty.”

I thought so

“But you are the most beautiful. This, I haven’t said to anyone.”

That’s unlikely.

When she let that pass in a tone like she didn’t believe him, Edgar shrugged his shoulders a little and leaned up against a tree.

“That wavy black-haired man just then, was he really a fairy?”

“Yes, he was.”

“He said that he came to take you back.”

Lydia felt awkward and kept her mouth shut.

Edgar had a keen eye so he must have realized.

“So, he’s the one who proposed to you.”

She didn’t imagine that Kelpie would come all the way here, so she regretted that she shouldn’t have talked about that.

If Edgar got involved in the mess between Kelpie, then things might turn out even more complicated.

“Like I said, it wasn’t a proposal, but more like a feeling that he wants to have me stay by his side.”

“Are you saying that he isn’t in love with you?”

“Yes, that’s right.”

“But as for me, I’m not calm about this.”

“It isn’t like you are even in love with me.”

“Why do you think that?”

“Because, I just think so.”

Edgar unusually looked seriously thoughtful.

“Mister. Kain, was his name? He was as handsome-looking as a Greek sculpture. Well, we can say he’s evenly matched with me.”

So he isn’t going to lower the level of his looks.

“I might lose in strength. But he doesn’t have intelligence, grace, a fortune or

title. Most women would be smart and choose me. But you are not those type of women.”

“.....This is stupid.”

“Yes, this is stupid. But isn’t love to compare things that would at once seem stupid and think about winning or losing.”

Though startled at what he said, Lydia tried to look for words to deny that.

“You’re wrong, you just always want to be the center of everyone’s attention.”

“That’s not my only worry. Paul seems to be just the type that you would fancy. Normal looks, normal impression, normal presence. The only positive thing about him is his good-natured personality. He doesn’t seem strong in making his way through the world and not that popular with young women, and even if he may be clumsy at times, he lives true to his heart and on top of that, he follows his dream of becoming a painter.

A man with a dream, ahh, for some reason, women are weak against those types of men. Even if they were poor and worked hard, they would support each other and live a modest life and it is your ideal to be able to grant his wish, isn’t it?”

“Don’t decide for me. Besides, you’re out of line by saying shameless things about another person.”

“But, you know, Lydia, an artist may appear pure and innocent but a lot of them are narrow-minded and unreasonable. You’ll be put through pain and toil.”

“I just met him, and it isn’t like that with us. And, Edgar, I don’t think falling in love is about meeting the right conditions.”

“I know, falling in love isn’t logical. That’s why, right now, I’m terribly uneasy. All my time tonight, ever since I saw you having a good time with Paul, I had feeling uneasy and can’t remain calm. After the fairy appeared, I’ve been stirred up even further. This insecure feeling, wouldn’t you say it’s love.”

When Lydia didn’t respond, Edgar was heated up even further.

“It can’t be helped that you are not able to believe in what I say. It might be that you are unable to let your guard down to a former criminal thief, but since love is logical, there’s hope for me. Even if you think I’m being brash, wouldn’t I have the right to tell you my feelings?”

She didn't know what part of his words that came pouring out of his mouth so smoothly.

All in all, it only looked like Edgar was enjoying a game of his to Lydia's eyes.

Most likely, a game that harbored no ill intent.

The fashionable style among the nobles is said to be to enjoy the strategy and skills in dealing with the love between someone married that wouldn't lead to either of them becoming serious.

For him to court and flirt with Lydia who he knew would definitely back away reminded her of that style.

It was pleasant to feel that someone liked you and if both of the people in that relationship were able to feel like they got closely acquainted with another, then there was no trouble.

Lydia was unmarried but knew a little about Edgar's past, so he would think that she wouldn't seriously build serious feelings towards him.

That was fine in itself. If he would periodically flannel her, then even Lydia wouldn't think bad of it and she would be able to do her job with a good heart for the sake of the earl family. She would also be able to feel closely acquainted with Edgar.

But, courtship that went over the lines was troublesome for her.

For Lydia, who wasn't a lady from noble birth, this was out of her capacity to handle. It was only going to confuse her.

"Let's stop this already. I don't have any intentions of playing a love game with you."

"Game?"

He frowned by knitting his brows which made him look like her words had burned him, but that may be just another one of his routine maneuvers in his game.

"In any case, I want you to stop! With those pretended words of yours."

She bowed her head down and was surprised at herself for saying it in such a harsh tone.

I'm so stupid for taking this so seriously. Even though she thought on one side, she was seriously become scared at being whispered this words about love and

what else.

She remembered the first time when she was young and received a letter that was close to a confession in saying that the writer had feelings for Lydia. It said that the person who sent it wanted her to come to the person's birthday party. It was in her neighborhood and a house where the family was well-acquainted with her parents and had invited them to tea before. She had played with the child of that house and the two of them enjoyed playing normally together. He had opened up to her and told her his worry but when he was with his other friends, he didn't talk to Lydia. Most likely, he didn't want to be poked fun by his friends for being friendly with the town's oddball.

Since they were in that sort of vague relationship, she was hesitant to believe in the message that was written in the letter. She mulled over what she should do, but in the end, left to go to the party. However, he didn't even once talk to Lydia in a place where many of his friends had gathered.

It was any other day it was normal, but at that time, Lydia was a little upset and wondered why he didn't look over to her direction.

That's why she went over to him and spoke up to him, but he only gave her a troubled, angry look.

"That was a lie."

She was told that he lost to a game with his friends and was made to write that lie of a letter; I thought so, was all she felt and she didn't have any memory of feeling that hurt.

Only, she regretted that she should of just went back home without speaking to him since she felt something was odd.

Most likely, if she was just invited to the party, then she would have done so. But, because of the letter that read like it was some sort of love confession and although she didn't believe in it that much, she was surprised and disgusted with herself for mistaking the distance between them.

But, remembering that now, she wondered why she felt a sudden fear arise in her.

"I apologize if I upset you. But,"

She was brought back to reality by Edgar's voice, but she kept her head down

and he saw something wet drop onto her hand that she had placed on her lap.

Huh? What am I crying for.....

“Lydia, is something wrong?”

Unable to figure what she was thinking, Lydia rushed to stand up.

“It’s nothing! I-I feel quite thirsty so I’ll go get something to drink!”

I wonder if he saw me. Oh, please, be that he didn’t see.

Lydia prayed as she scrambled into the lounge where her father was.

## Chapter 3 - Scarlet moon, white moon

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[Imposter who poses as the Earl, we are aware that you have no right to claim as the Blue Knight Earl. Relinquish the sword at once. Or else we will come hunting for the sword as well as your life.]

In the letter that was written with that message, of course there was no signature, only a mark of a crescent moon was drawn with red ink on the envelope.

“What a ridiculous letter.”

Edgar tossed that to his side and reached out to his teacup.

He was put in such a bad mood first thing in the morning.

The ball last night continued on till midnight and he finally went to sleep in the first hours of morning and when he woke up, it was already forenoon, but this was the lifestyle of a noble who would spend day in, day out in evening balls.

The butler apparently was diligently waiting for his master to wake up to bring in that letter with the blood rushed out of his face and claimed that it was thrown in from the back door some time last night. Everyone had been so busy that one of them finally noticed it some time this morning.

“My lord, what shall we do. Shall I notify the police?”

The sword was the proof that he was lord of this earl family.

There was no mistake that the one who alleged that Edgar was an earl imposter and ordered him to fork over the sword was connected to the man who targeted Raven yesterday and called him a ‘dog of Prince.’

“Hm, let’s see, the police still can’t find anything about the instructor that forgot his fingers here yet, right? Either way, it looks like all we can do is tighten our security for now.”

“That will be easily done.”

“Then, the rest will be taken care of by us.”

The butler replied “Understood” and didn’t press on about what he was going to do with the mysterious group of unverified origin. Even if he sensed Edgar



had an acquaintance with a not-so-peaceful organization in the past, he never questioned him.

The Blue Knight Earl was said to have fairies and fae-related people under his dominion, and long ago, he had protected his mysterious people who had merrows blood in them from the harsh oppression of the Church.

Tomkins was from one of those clans. He displayed unbendable loyalty to the earl family.

Edgar imagined that for generations, the Blue Knight Earl must have been a Lord who was immensely trusted by them, which made him feel slightly apologetic.

He obtained the title of earl, of course, because it was useful. But he had no intention of dirtying this name.

Even if he was an imposter, he only had to become the real thing and he realizes that he has the responsibility of protecting this family.

He couldn't be daunted each time at this kind of threat.

"However, my lord, please do not put yourself in harm's way than the sword....."

"Are you worrying for me?"

"You still do not have an heir."

Since the family head was absent for hundred of years, the successor's condition remained unknown, so the earl family name was not eliminated and left remained. However, if something were to happen to Edgar, then it may be decided that the bloodline had ended.

"I see. I still had that duty to perform. Tomkins, I would like to let you relax quickly, but I may have been hated by our future housewife candidate."

"Everything is well, my lord, there are plenty of husbands who are hated by their wives."

".....I see, that's encouraging."

The butler placed the newspaper, that had all of its wrinkles pressed out flat, in front of Edgar who made a sour smile and left the room. As he left, Raven came into the room.

"Raven, I have a feeling like there was an organization called "Scarlet Moon" in

one of the underground organizations that we were investigating.”

“Yes. They are not officially going by that name, but they are a robbery gang that donates their profits. They are quite famous within the lower parts of town and there is rumor that the golden coins that were scattered out onto St. Giles Street and Southwark was their doing, and sure enough there was money thrown into the houses at the East End. On a portion of the coins, a moon was drawn on by red ink.”

“A chivalrous robbery group, which means that the gold coins must have been stolen from somewhere, right?”

“It seems like they don’t go by the Scarlet Moon name when they steal so there is no definite. But there are wealthy families and individuals who claim that the golden coins that were scattered around had been stolen from their place.”

As he read from his memo, Raven read off names of wealthy families and companies from that.

There were some names that sounded familiar to Edgar.

“Those are Prince’s source of funds.”

“Yes.”

It was questionable if they were to make any damage against Prince who was at the top of a pyramid of money and wealth that he piled up by just snatching away from golden coins near the foot of the mountain, but there was a possibility that they were doing dull activities against their target Prince.

That may be connected with the attack against Edgar this time.

“Have they killed any up till now?”

“There are no incidents that were big enough to be reported in the papers.”

“Since they are a donating robbery gang, murder would hinder their image.”

And yet, from the sudden attack the other day and from reading this threatening letter, they seem brimming to kill him. On top of that, they are ordering him to hand over the earl family sword.

That wasn’t something that could be exchanged with gold, and even if they stole it, they would just be troubled at how to dispose it. More like, they were attached to the Blue Knight Earl name.

Like they didn’t want Edgar, an imposter and the henchman of Prince as they

saw him to continue going on under the name of the earl.

“I wonder why it is the “Scarlet Moon”.....”

Moon.

The spell of an exchange with the moon.

The promise that the Blue Knight Earl made with the fairy queen.

It was like he was cursed by the moon.

Now that he thought about it, last night, Marygold was making a commotion about a moon ring or something.

Edgar had a feeling like he replied something like that case had to be dealt with through Lydia.

Marygold, last night, I thought I saw small, transparent wings on that little girl's back.....

Standing atop of Nico's head.

Nico, yes, that darn cat talked at him with his paws on his sides like he was giving him a lecture.

Yelling at him asking what he had done to Lydia.

I hadn't done anything to Lydia.

More importantly, it looks like I drank too much. There was no way a cat would talk.

No, didn't he seem like he understood what people were saying from time to time?

“Raven, is Lydia here?”

“Not yet.”

“.....I wonder if she'll come.”

“Mr. Nico was drinking tea in her office as usual, so I believe she may be arriving soon.”

Ahh, tea. Yes, he was a cat who loved tea. And yet, the butler and Raven serve him tea as if it was natural.

“By the way, Raven, I was always wondering about it, but why do you call a cat Mister?”

“He was a cat?”

He returned a question like he was confused.

“He isn’t a cat?”

“Since Lord Edgar would periodically talk to him, I thought he was different.”

When he thought about it again, Edgar became confused as well.

“For some reason or other, I have a feeling like a conversation is going on between us. First of all, I can’t think that he could do such a trick of picking up a tea cup and drinking from it...”

Oh, well.

Ever since he came to know Lydia, her magical and mysterious reality was sinking into him.

Even last night, he witnessed an ebony black horse jump and disappear into the fountain.

Yes, that fairy, he was the fairy that proposed to Lydia.

He didn’t want to lose against a horse.

“One more thing, Lord Edgar, Mister Paul Foreman is here to see you.”

“Paul? I don’t think I promised him.”

“He says he will wait for how ever many hours. It’s been two hours already.”

Letting out a sigh, Edgar stood up to get himself ready.

“Then, he’ll be able to wait some more.”

Lydia finally arrived at her workplace palace in Mayfair and only gave a simple and quick greeting to the butler and rushed into her office.

She didn’t know what kind of face she should put on to meet Edgar so she decided she was going to stay-put in this room for today.

To tell the truth, Lydia didn’t remember all that well what happened after that at the ball.

She was in such a despair that she chugged down three glasses of punch, but after that, she didn’t care about it much.

According to her father, she was in quite high spirits and was dancing gaily but the more the ball pressed on into the night, the more everyone got drunk, so courtesy and manners and anything well-mannered gradually slipped away as it got more louder and more foolish.

That’s why, even if Lydia was drunk, it wasn’t so much that she stood out, but her father had apparently taken her home before she made a fool of herself.

She changed her state of mind and decided to get to work by first getting her hands on the letters that just arrived addressed to the fairy doctor.

However, it wasn't a situation where she could concentrate on work. Marygold, in the form of a little human girl came bursting into her office.

"Miss Lydia, oh, how I have been waiting for you. I needed to ask for your opinion at once.... The earl would only tell me that he leaves all fairy-related ordeals to Miss Lydia, but Miss Lydia wasn't sober last night, so Mister Nico told me to wait until tomorrow,"

".....What is the matter?"

"The "Moon" of My Majesty isn't coming off of that man's finger. That was to be presented to the man, to the earl, who was going to marry Our Majesty,"

Oh, yes, she had forgotten about that. Kelpie had stolen it from Marygold and tried to give it to Lydia, but it was mistakenly accepted by Paul.

Which means, Paul who was wearing the "Moon" ring was tied to the moon promise of marrying the fairy queen.

If the fairy queen decided she wanted him as replacement to the earl, then as long as he had the ring, it would be difficult to stop him from being taken to the land of the fairies.

"At this rate, we would be left to have that man marry our highness."

"Well, wait, Marygold. You just need the ring to come off, right?"

As Lydia said that, she could imagine that if that happened, then Marygold would be going after Edgar and telling him to accept the "Moon."

He just didn't have to accept it. She didn't have the strength like Kelpie to force it on him.

But, Edgar had a soft spot for women, so there might be some sort of mistake and he might end up accepting it.

She was trying to think up of something, so when there was a knock on the door, she didn't think and answered "Come in."

"Good morning, Lydia."

As soon as she saw Edgar's face, Lydia felt her face turn hotter and quickly faced down.

She hid her face behind the letter she was holding, pretending to read it.

“...What is it? I’m a little busy right now.”

“The letter, it’s upside-down.”

He swiped the letter from her hands that was panic-stricken and looked down at her from above.

“Paul is here. It looks like it is your job to save him.”

It was rare for him to suddenly get to the main topic without any of his usual tiresomely-long flattery and back-scratching.

Lydia sat blankly as the wind was taken out of her sails but also revealed, so she was finally able to raise her head.

She was nervous if he would bring up what happened last night as she didn’t know what kind of reaction she would make.

At this rate, Edgar might have not even noticed the disarray in Lydia’s feelings.

“Oh, i-is that so. I was just talking with Marygold about him.”

“It seems he was barged in at his boarding house room to hurry up and give back the rind.”

“Eh, by who?”

“I think Mister Kain.”

Ahh, that kelpie, how persistent!

He was nearly attacked by him as a horse but when he threw the Bible that was placed at his pillow-side, he disappeared, was what he saw in his dream.”

“It isn’t a dream, most likely.”

“Anyways, he was told that he’ll come however many times until he gets it back, so Mister Foreman doesn’t want to continue having this dream because of the ring. He claims that the ring is surely cursed. And so, it seemed like Mister Kain had come to pay you a visit yesterday, so he came here for advice. Is it all right if I call him in?”

“Yes, of course. It’s my responsibility for getting him involved.”

After some while, Paul Foreman was led in by Raven, but he looked completely exhausted.

Standing up, Lydia greeted him.

“I’m terribly sorry, Paul. You had saved me yesterday and yet you’re in such a troubled situation.”

“Oh, no, I’m glad you were all right. ....But, I have no idea what is going on. And the earl claims that it is the work of a fairy.”

It seems like the fairy painter couldn’t believe it so easily that he had come in contact with a fairy.

Urged by Edgar, he sat down on a chair.

Lydia also sat down, but first had him show her the ring.

It was worn tightly on his right-hand middle-finger. It was quite a mature painter’s hand which was paint-stained and had several hard calluses made from tightly gripping a brush.

“It’s a moonstone.”

As Edgar pointed out, it was a large moonstone. It was a glistening milky white colored gemstone. The shining light that shown through its translucent inner side was shaped like a crescent moon.

“Marygold, are you saying that this moonstone waxes and wanes just like the real moon?”

“Yes. The width of the light inside it changes. On full moon nights, it spreads out wide and thins to a barely visible line on a new moon.”

After she said that, she shook her sunny-yellow wings and corrected herself.

“No, I meant to say that it is the real moon.”

She was in a little human girl’s form and yet she forgot to hide her wings.

But Edgar and Paul had not realized that or this wasn’t any situation to point that out as they were focused on the ring.

“You sure wouldn’t get bored if you looked at it everyday. Paul, in a way, you can see yourself as lucky.”

What a comment, it was a problem that didn’t concern himself.

“You have to be kidding me, that’s impossible.”

“So, why isn’t it coming off?”

“It’s because Kelpie forced it onto his finger. A part of the ring is bent and digging into his finger,” replied Lydia.

“Kelpie?”

“Um, Kain is the aquatic horse, kelpie.”

Edgar only responded with a mm-hm, so he mustn’t know all that much about

aquatic horses.

“He-he was a kelpie! The ones that are said to eat humans....?”

The fairy painter obviously had known and gave out a near shrieking voice. But, Edgar only responded in a matter-of-fact way.

“So he’s a man-eating horse.”

“They also eat domesticated animals, but they don’t touch the liver and leave it on the river-side.”

“What a wasteful taste. Foie Gras are the best thing there is.”

“More importantly, what should I do.....”

Paul desperately tried to refocus the topic that was slowly being turned off-course.

“At any rate, we should try to get the ring off.”

“I tried several options but it was impossible. Soap and oil didn’t work.”

“Then cutting the part of the ring is our only option, don’t you think? If we do it carefully, we could manage to not harm your precious fingers,” suggested Edgar.

“You mustn’t! If there was any damage harmed to Our Majesty’s ring, then, I will never be able to go home.”

Marygold burst out in tears.

“Oh, that would be terrible. Let’s think of something else,” said Edgar.





Edgar was quick to take her side.

“Is there another option?” asked Lydia.

“Wouldn’t it easily slip off if his finger got thinner? We just have to have Paul lose weight.”

He says to lost weight, but it wasn’t like Paul was fat.

“I’d say it would come off if he didn’t eat for a week, don’t you think?”

“Fo,.....for a week?”

“If it doesn’t come off, then another week.”

“I’ll die.”

Paul was on the verge of tears.

“It’s all right, one can still live even if they were skin and bone.”

Since Edgar said he wasn’t saying a joke but an actual fact, Paul slumped his shoulders like he was a prisoner who was given his death sentence.

“I will talk it over with kelpie. Although it isn’t full-proof, I think you should carry a Bible and cross just in case,” reassured Lydia.

“Thank you, Lydia.....” said Paul.

Just when they thought everything had calmed down, Nico appeared on the windowsill.

“Oi, Lydia, we have another visitor.”

She thought she saw a pair of thin wings behind Nico, then a small girl glided down to land on the windowsill.

“Lady Sweetpea!” cried Marygold and flew out to her.

“Marygold, I was wondering what was taking you so long, what are you doing? I can’t believe you are not even able to fulfill the duty that was entrusted to you by Our Majesty.”

“I-I’m terribly sorry, but, actually.....”

The fairy that was called Sweetpea was indeed wearing a faint pink dress. She apparently had a higher title than Marygold but both of them looked like the same-aged little girls, so the sight of the both of them talking was a strange one.

“What?” Her Highness’ ring went into the hands of another man other than the earl?”

Sweetpea fell back like she went dizzy and Marygold rushed to straighten her.

Lydia secretly glared at Nico.

“Why did you have to bring such a troublesome fairy.”

“Well, I was just asked for directions.”

“Why are you always asked for directions?”

“Who knows, I was just taking a nap on top of the roof.”

He must have been leaning on his elbow as a pillow and crossing his legs, not acting like the average cat and pretentiously acting dignified.

From someone who was flying by, he was an eye-catcher no matter what. They would realize at first glance that he was a fairy.

“Oh, well, it can’t be helped. We will just have this man marry Her Highness.”

It was no time for Sweetpea to recover and make a decision. She grabbed ahold of Paul’s coat.

This was what Lydia was fearing.

“Hold on just a moment, are you saying any man will do as your queen’s husband?”

“All of us are tired of waiting for Her Majesty’s marriage. She won’t take anymore other than the earl and we went through so much trouble to get our hands on the ‘moon.’ We cannot wait any further. For the sake of our fairy clan’s prosperity, we need her to quickly get married. So, we will take this man

back and go with him as the earl.”

What rough handling.

But it looked like Sweetpea was serious.

She looked around the room and saw what she was looking for and flew over to Edgar.

“Lord Earl, please forgive my sudden intrusion. My name is Sweetpea and I am one of the maids of Our Majesty the Queen.”

“Yes, nice to meet you.”

He looked like he didn’t know exactly what was going on, but he still gave the highest-quality of a smile.

“Truth be told, we would have liked to guide you to our land, but since Our Lady had made the decision to marry the one who wears the ring, I can only humbly ask for your understanding this time.”

“I don’t mind at all.”

“I would be honored to pay you a visit once again.”

“Once again?”

“Yes, since a mortal’s life is short, there will be a need for Our Majesty to marry again.”

“Oh, I see. By that time, the earl wouldn’t be me, though. More than that, the problem at stake right now, is that he is a painter that I have a favor in. It would be quite troublesome for me if he is gone.”

It seems like for the most part, Edgar didn’t have the intention of turning his back on Paul.

Lydia was a little surprised at that. Edgar wasn’t a soft-hearted person. Even if he saw the gift of painting in him, she thought that he was the kind of person who would think twice about turning his back on him if that would mean the fairies would go away.

It hadn’t been that long since they met, and he wasn’t a woman, and she couldn’t imagine that the gift of a painter had that much value for Edgar.

So he must really like his personality.

“Then, let us trade with something.”

“No, no trade!”

Lydia rushed to interrupt, as trading with a fairy was terribly dangerous.

“Then, you have no right to stop us. We will take him.”

Unlike Marygold, she was a stubborn fairy.

“Don’t talk stupid. That ‘moon’ belongs to me. I plan to giving it to Lydia, so don’t act like you’re in charge.”

Oh, why does he have to come out again.

She suddenly felt so tired as she turned around to see that a black wavy-haired young man was entering the room through the window.

“Oi, you little midgets, get out of my sight. Or else, I’ll gobble you up!”

Ahhhh, cried Sweetpea and Marygold and both of them clinged onto to both sides of Paul.

“You, say that you will go with us right now. Or else, we will fall prey to this ill-gotten loud fairy!”

Even as she shivered from fear of Kelpie, she desperately tried to persuade Paul.

“Why you little, don’t you dare make fun of a great and dignified kelpie!”

Things were getting out of control. Lydia lost her patience and screamed out:

“STOP IT ALREADY! If you come one more step near him, this fairy doctor in front of you will not allow it! Understand? Kelpie, and Marygold, and Sweetpea, you all have to go through me first!”

She was breathing with her shoulders as everyone finally calmed down to silence.



Even if she was an inexperienced fairy doctor, there must have been some effect of her intimidating bluster.

The two little girls promised to wait patiently until the ring came off.

With Kelpie, he didn’t fear Lydia one little bit, but if the field fairies were not going to interfere, then he said he wouldn’t mind waiting until the ring got itself off.

The field fairies were fine since they were good-natured, but as with the kelpie, there was no assurance that he wouldn’t do something rotten to Edgar even as he waited.

Lydia consulted with Edgar about letting Paul stay at the earl residence until the ring would come off.

The earl house which had the merrow's sword was in one way the territory of the merrows. It was a ground where an aquatic horse couldn't do as he pleased. Edgar agreed readily and just while they were at it, offered Paul the job of painting a painting to hang in the house.

"Paul, you shouldn't go that way. It would be a bad idea to go near the river."

Carrying a sketchbook in one arm, he was about to go off the path in the bushes, but rushed to come back.

"Then, let's go on that hill."

The kelpie's magic grew stronger near the river. It would be best to take precautions. Lydia thought that the hill will do better and followed after him.

The reason Paul came out to the outskirts of London to sketch was to work on sketching a drawing of the painting he was asked by Edgar.

As he refrained from his meals in order to remove the ring, he was eager to get started on the job he was offered.

And the reason that Lydia came along with him on his sketch expedition was, unlike in the city, the wild fields was much more closer to the fairy's domain.

Lydia was worried about him going to an area that had strong fairy magic, and the one who suggested she accompany him was Edgar.

[I'm jealous that he gets to be protected by you]

He said it in his usual light, frivolous way of talking but he was awfully quick to let her go.

On the night of the ball, he was persistently making a fuss about her getting too friendly with Paul, but for him to say she should go along with him, was surprising and unexpected for Lydia.

Now that she thought about it, since the night of the ball, he didn't flirt or act like he was courting like always.

Oh, did he perhaps, notice that I was crying?

Just remembering how she acted, made Lydia panic-stricken but she managed to calm herself down.

If he had realized, there was no way he wouldn't use that as a topic to tease her

with.

Then he must have finally grew tired of me.

Edgar was going to parties here and there as usual, and if he was able to go about to all the ladies to court them as he pleased, then he wouldn't have any time to be wasting on Lydia.

More like if he would remain calmed down like this, she would be able to work harmoniously as the earl family's fairy doctor.

Once they decided on a spot on the hill, Paul immediately got to work concentrating on his sketching. Lydia spent her time taking a walk around the area and taking a peek at his sketches once in a while.

The maid that accompanied them also conversed with her, but to be able to come to a spot surrounded with greenery and feeling the wind brush against the frill of her bonnet and spending time without doing anything was peaceful and relaxing in itself.

"Are you bored at all?"

Paul had completed most of his work and spoke up to Lydia who was gazing at the scenery near him.

"Not at all. Not too long ago, I was living in the countryside, so there were always times when I was watching the clouds go by under a tree the whole day."

"What a wonderful way to spend the day."

Being told like that, Lydia felt all warm inside and smiled.

"I had lived in the loud and busy city all my life so my dream is to buy a house someplace where the sky is clear and beautiful and live my days drawing wild flowers."

He leaned his head in a somewhat embarrassed manner.

"Even if I say that, I couldn't possibly live that kind of luxury unless my work is recognized by society."

"I'm sure you will be recognized. Edgar seems like he will also help you."

"I hope so."

After mulling it over, he said once again.

"I think the reason the earl is regarding me kindly is because of you. I have a

feeling like his eyes caught my fairy painting so that he could make you happy. It seems like he wasn't that interested in fairy paintings himself."

"Impossible, Edgar doesn't see me as that special a person."

"Is that so? Aren't you his main love?"

"Oh, Paul, you can tell by observing him for five minutes how much of a flirt he is, can't you?"

With a troubled, sour smile, Paul scratched his head.

"Well, yes, I guess...., but I just have a feeling, like he saw you differently."

What part? She wanted to ask him that, but she thought it over, thinking it was ridiculously stupid. However it appeared to Paul, there was no mistake that Edgar was a skirt-chasing flirt.

"Paul, he is sure to realize your talent. Edgar has critical eyes about that. Especially with men."

That's right. He didn't have any choice in regards to women, but with men, he definitely separated how he acted according to whom. He wasn't just enjoying his time and fooling around in the ton, as he was putting his eyes on who had power in politics and wealth and getting familiar with them.

No matter how high a title the noble possessed, he wouldn't spare a glance to someone who only had a name and would proudly go up to someone who climbed up the ladder himself even though he was called a vulgarian behind his back.

Every day, there were more and more prominent figures who visited the earl house.

For Edgar, it wasn't difficult at all to win the trust of someone he wanted to win the favor of.

And to increase his number of acquaintances and become famous himself and another measure to protect himself. If something were to happen to him and all of England would make a commotion about it, then it would make his enemies hesitant in making a move on him.

But, imagining that Edgar was going to take an advantage of building a strong wall around him and plotting his revenge, then Lydia was concerned for him increasing his number of 'powerful friends.'

“How would you say it, he is liked by anyone.”

Yes. If it was someone who didn't know the real him.

“Maybe when people meet him, he becomes more mysterious the more you talk to him, and yet that increases your interest and you want to know more about him. What kind of person is the earl, really? Lydia, you seem to know the earl more than anyone.”

He's a demon. But she couldn't possibly say that.

But, even Lydia was fully aware about all the details.

All she knew was that even though Edgar was a scoundrel, he was a terribly sad man. He is still fighting against his destiny.

“When I see him, I remember about my past. To the first time I visited the estate of a noble when I was taken by my father who was a painter. It was an enormous palace, and it appeared like it was a world from out of a children's book. So much that I believed the noble people who lived there were the descendants of the heroes who were sung in ballads. Especially the young son, he had bright, golden-blond hair and I think he was about twelve or thirteen, but he was a boy who was reminiscing Adonis.”

Lydia's curiosity was strongly intrigued by that story.

“Did he look alike? .....To Edgar.”

“Yes, the first time I met him, I thought he was that boy grown-up. But, that family wasn't the Earl Ashenbert's family.”

She was a little hesitant if she should ask or not. But, in the end, Lydia questioned him.

“What family lived there?”

“Oh, it was a family of a duke. He was the young son of the Duke of Silvainford.”  
Ducal family? That's the highest there is.

“At that age, it would be normal for him to be attending a public school. But he apparently had a weak health and had a number of tutors as he stayed in the family manor house.”

But, he had a weak health. So, he must be someone different.

“My father was hired by the Duke and painting the castle and garden and family members. I was sixteen at the time and I didn't have any wish to become a



painter but I was made to go along with my father as his assistant and prepared his paint and made his canvases.... The young son would come and watch as I did that.”

“And so the two of you grew as friends?”

“Yes, it was just for a few months, though, the young son didn’t have anyone to play with so I must have been the ideal catch. He saw my sorry excuses of a drawing even though I wasn’t interested in becoming an artist and claimed that I had talent. If he were to succeed as duke, he said that he’ll look after me as well. Even though he was a child, since he was surrounded with magnificent and sophisticated pieces of art, I was slightly put in high-spirits. I was young so I easily promised him that I’ll become a painter but I had no talent what-so-ever and went through pain-staking work after that. But thanks to that, I realized that the painting that my father had criticized and I had kept away from was actually what I loved doing the most. He truly was a fair and warmhearted young boy who really made you realize what good breeding was.”

Even at that part, Lydia wanted to tilt her head.

“That’s why, when I heard that he and the duke family members had all died, I was shocked.”

But the idea that he was a different person was easily changed.

Edgar had said that he was a man who was supposed to be dead. That he was robbed of everything, his parents, his house and his name.

“.....They died, but how,”

“I heard it was a fire. It was hard for me to imagine that the people, and that beautiful castle, the garden, all no longer exist. I was hoping that I could show my art to the young son more than anyone else once I became a recognized painter.”

When Lydia realized it, she was tightly holding her trembling fingers.

“Oh, I’m sorry. I brought up such a strange thing to say.”

“Oh, no, not at all.”

“Oh, but the only part that the son and the earl resembled each other, was their hair and eye colors.”

In other words, once he got acquainted with Edgar, he found out that he had a

completely different personality than the young son of the duke family.

I wonder if his two-faced personality was severe from when he was young.

“....Uh, if that young boy was still alive, do you think he would remember you?”

He gave Lydia a puzzled look. It was a strange question to ask when he said the boy was dead.

Yet, he answered her after he thought about it.

“I would be very happy if he did remember.”

Edgar had surely remembered him.

That's why he was offering Paul a chance to get his name out.

Just like how Paul was reminiscing about the young boy he met at the duke family house, Edgar too, was feeling nostalgic.

He protected Paul from the fairies and is allowing Lydia to put aside her work for the earl family and accompanying him.

Lydia first-handedly experienced the heartless, cruel side of Edgar, but she also feels that he is someone warmhearted and compassionate.

He would become cruel only for the sake of his comrades who supported each other and survived through the most desperate and dangerous situations.

It was no wonder if he treasured the friendship that he was with Paul in the past.

“Lydia, I'm thrilled to be gazed by you this much, but could you at least not make a frown while you do it.”

When Lydia realized her situation, she had been staring at Edgar like she was glaring at him from across the table in between them.

“Eh, ah, oh, I was just thinking....”

“If it's about me, then you don't have to think, I'll answer. Anything you want to know.”

Lydia had been taking lunch with Edgar who was unusually at his own home near noon-time.

It was just the two of them on the terrace that was filled with the sunlight. Paul was continuing his efforts to lose weight and it just so happened that he would forget to have his meals when he got absorbed into his artwork.

Even when they offered him to join them for meals, he would reply yes but

never show up.

That's why, right now, it was just Edgar and Lydia. Now that she thought about it, they didn't speak as just the two of them since the night of the ball, which suddenly made Lydia go into a nervous fit.

"Did you used to have bad health?"

She opened her mouth in an attempt to evade the situation, so she spoke what was going through her mind.

"Uh-hm," replied Edgar without a hesitation.

"I was cramped up in the house because of asthma. It went away when I was ten, though, my mother was still terribly worried. So I hadn't shown my face to most of all the guests that came to our manor house."

"That's why there is no one who knows you from then in the ton."

"Though, excluding one person."

That one was Paul. He must have realized that Paul had said something to her that made Lydia suddenly bring this up.

"But, weren't there a lot of servants? And tutors."

"My tutors and the upper staff were closely acquainted with my family, so they are all dead. The servants that survived must not even know my face."

It was said that in an estate that was operated with hundreds of servants, other than just the few numbers of the upper staff, such as the butler, housekeeper, lady's maids and footman, servants normally didn't come in contact with the master of the house and his family.

"Even if there was people who remembered that boy, they wouldn't think that I was him. He has a grave. There's a body in it. I don't know who it is. Well, it isn't like I opened up the coffin and made sure, but there is an unidentifiable gendered, burnt to a black crisp body of a child."

He purposefully said it like that so as to baffle her and took a bite out off a roast chicken like nothing was wrong.

She immediately lost her appetite and placed her knife and fork down but Lydia thought for some reason that she didn't want to lose.

"The reason you apparently don't look anything like that boy is because your personality is completely different from his. At the least, you must have not

been someone who had an aggressive or overbearing side to you and didn't tease others rotten?"

He brought up a glass to his eyes to gaze up at the reflection of himself in it.

"Yes. I think so too. Too many things have happened to me. I become confused myself when I think if I am the same person from me back then."

He suddenly had his family murdered and taken away to a foreign country. A man named Prince got possession of Edgar for some unknown reason and Lydia had no idea of how he was treated, but he was a slave there, who had no freedom and robbed of his will.

Raven, who was also kept captive there and until he escaped with the comrades he came to befriend, he must have needed to acquire his two-face to hide what he was thinking and deceive his enemies, and his calm decisiveness, and the cruel, heartlessness in order to get through all of the dangerous situations.

Even after they escaped, they had to hide in the undergrounds of society to evade the pursuits of their enemies and fought and maneuvered through battles in order to steady their grounds....in a battleground that was right next to death.

There was no way he could remain a simple and innocent young noble.

Since there was no one who helped him, he changed himself in order to survive and fights to protect Raven.

"I don't know you from the past, but, I don't dislike you as you are now."

".....You really are...."

He was about to say something, but closed his mouth.

Then, he gave her a soft smile.

She couldn't guess what Edgar was really thinking, but when she was faced with such a happy smile, Lydia felt relieved.

He may have changed, but there must be parts of him that remained the same. If it was someone who didn't know the experience of peaceful bliss of happiness, no matter how good they acted, they probably would never be able to make this smile.

That's why she couldn't think of Edgar as just a criminal and wanted to help him win back his peaceful life.

She hoped that he could cut off his hatred of Prince and stay as the Earl Ashenbert.

“What are humans thinking to burn their meat.”

The sudden interrupting voice came from Kelpie. They hadn’t noticed that he had sat down on the chair that was set out for Paul and ripping a chunk out of the roast chicken in his hand.

“Raw is so much better.”

“What are you doing here!”

“To see you. How is it? Did the ring come off of his finger?”

“Even if the ring came off, I won’t let you take Lydia.”

Kelpie passed a glance over to Edgar who said that.

“Don’t open that big sassy mouth of yours. Even if you’re the Blue Knight Earl, you can’t see fairies at all now. So to have Lydia work under you is intolerable.”

“If you want to be by her side that much, then I can hire you as well. You can at least pull a carriage, can’t you?”

Treated as a horse, Kelpie must have blown his cool as he threw the chicken bone.

“I am not a horse. I’m the great and noble Waterhorse!”

He leaned himself out and glared at Edgar with threatening eyes. Lydia thought Edgar was such a daredevil to look back straight into Kelpie’s eyes.

He must not know of the ferocity of kelpies, as the seductive fairy’s eyes corrupted people’s hearts and desires.

There even were people who fainted from the immense fear.

“What is the matter, Earl, if you’re scared, shouldn’t you call that servant of yours?”

The reason the hot tempered kelpie didn’t immediately attack Edgar was apparently because he was being cautious of Raven.

“If it’s Raven, he isn’t here.”

And yet, Edgar didn’t hesitate to tell him that.

“Hmm, then if I wanted to snap that neck of yours, there is no one here to stop me.”

“I will stop you!”

Lydia held out the charm that warded off evil in front of Kelpie. It was a rolled-up ball of papers ripped out of the Bible.

He distorted his face to make a grimace, like something foul-smelling was suddenly stuck out in front of his nose. Even if kelpie disliked holy things, it only affected them to that level.

And yet, he must not be seriously considering to attack him, as he stepped back.

“Aren’t you embarrassed to be protected by a female?”

“It’s tremblingly thrilling to have Lydia drive off men who come after her for my sake.”

He wasn’t wrong, but it didn’t sound right.

“Lydia, where is the good in this kind of weakling with a big mouth? However you think about it, I’m the better choice.”

“Of course she would choose a human than a horse.”

“I told you I am not a horse! Oi, Lydia, make it clear. Me or him, which do you choose.”

He says choose, but what kind of choice is it to have between a man-eating fairy and a former criminal philanderer.

“Ohhh, both of you are like that!”

“Lydia’s favorite is the fairy painter,” murmured Edgar.

“Wha-what are you saying.”

“You accepted to be his model, didn’t you? But you said you didn’t want to.”

“That was, the way things went.”

When she went along on his sketch expedition, he asked if he could sketch her, so she just sat down on the grass.

Since it was an easy thing to do, if he asked her to do it again, there wasn’t any particular reason to refuse.

It wasn’t like he was going to paint Lydia, and if he was just going to use that sketch to make a fairy painting, then it wasn’t something to make a fuss about.

“Mister Kain, that’s why I am not the one you should be worried about.”

“Is that right? My rival is that man who stole away my ‘moon’?”

Stole? More like you forced it on him.

“Edgar, don’t say such an irresponsible thing.”

“If you have feelings for him, then I will be a man and withdraw. At least I don’t want to be hated.”

If he said it like that, there was nothing for Lydia to refute about.

If she strongly said he was wrong, then it would seem like she was desperately trying to clear up Edgar’s misunderstanding between her and Paul.

Even if he misunderstood, then it was a wish come true if he would stop pretending to court her just for fun.

That’s right. Paul was a good man, and there is no guarantee that I wouldn’t grow feelings for him.

But, for some reason, she was disappointed that he wasn’t jealous.

It felt a little unsatisfying to not be able to hear Edgar’s flirting attacks towards her...

Oh, no, that was impossible. I was just surprised, is all.

She panicked and come up with an excuse, but Lydia came to realize something. Edgar, perhaps, didn’t want to be hated by Lydia, but he might not want to be hated by Paul. Even the fight between Kelpie for who gets to have Lydia was just a playful word game for him to enjoy and have fun. But he had no intention of playing that kind of game with Paul.

He had no serious intention of fighting over Lydia, so there should be no point to displease Paul.

Lydia let the strength go out of her, and slumped down onto her chair.

Well, that figures.

I was perfectly aware that Edgar’s flirting behavior and his courting words weren’t really serious from the beginning.

“Oh, great, so it isn’t like you are serious about Lydia.”

The simple-minded kelpie opened his mouth and said to say such a thoughtless comment, which worsened Lydia’s tired mood. That’s why she didn’t realize that Edgar’s mood turned fowl and was silently accumulating.

As he watched Kelpie grab a hand-full of bread, Edgar slid one of his plates that he hadn’t touched to his direction.

“Mister Kain, taste this too if you like.”

Even as he said it tasted bad, the greedy kelpie swallowed the elegantly set meal in one gulp.

But then, the color of his face quickly changed and he stood up.

“Wh-what is this.... What did you give me!”

“A liver patty.”

Liver. ....Organs. What a kelpie never eats.

Needless to say, the color drained out of Lydia’s face.

He had no idea what would happen if you seriously anger a kelpie. Even if this place was the earl estate grounds where magic was difficult to conduct, if a savage waterhorse were to go on the loose....

Lydia wouldn’t be able to stop him.

On the back of the kelpie, who was trembling from rage, his mane and tail grew out. His form of a horse was starting to seep out.

But, Edgar still talked like nothing was wrong.

“You know, it’s dangerous to put something in your mouth that was offered by someone you can’t trust.”

“How dare you...., next time I see you, I’ll ripe you to shreds!”

Kelpie leaped off the terrace like a gust of wind.

It seemed like eating organs was something that surprised and panicked the kelpie more than it making him mad.

Lydia felt relieved from the bottom of her heart, but at the same time, she wanted to plant her head in her hands.

“What were you thinking! It isn’t courageous if you are oblivious to danger!”

“He was the one who wasn’t taking me seriously.”

The thin smile that he made came from the darkness in him that didn’t normally surface.

He wasn’t oblivious to danger, he just wasn’t scared.

At least for him, a creature that might take away his life wasn’t any danger, but what he must fear the most, was the existence of his nemesis that kept him alive as he robbed everything that he had.

“Pardon me, my lord.”

Paul appeared at the terrace and Edgar turned his eyes to him with a look that



was changed to the smile of a composed and generous earl.

“Paul, I’m afraid your meal was just eaten by Mister Kain. I’ll have a new dish prepared for you at once.”

“Oh, no, that is all right. More importantly, my lord, I have a favor I would like to ask.”

“What is it?”

After a little hesitation, his face changed to determination as he opened his mouth.

“May I take a look at the sword of Lord Blue Knight?”

According to legend, the sword was bestowed along with peerage from the King of England, Edward I to the founder of the earl family, Lord Blue Knight. It was a rare piece that served as one’s proof as heir to the earl family.

The reason Edgar, who was unrelated to the Ashenbert family, was accepted as the Earl of Ibrazel was because he obtained the sword.

And Paul is saying that he wishes to see the sword that was could also be a family treasure.

“In regards to the painting you ordered, I wanted to create a fairy painting based on the story of Lord Blue Knight. And if so, then I thought I should paint the legendary sword in it as well.”

He must have thought it was a reckless thing to ask, as he continued to speak in a nervous manner.

“Oh, uh, I wouldn’t do anything like touching or dirtying it. Just seeing it would be enough. As long as I can burn the image of it in my head. I was thinking that if it was just a normal fairy painting, then it wouldn’t be fit to hang in this great house, and so I was mulling it over in my mind, and I just came up with this idea.”

Could it have been Lydia’s imagination that she thought she saw Edgar’s eyes narrow sharply as he looked at Paul.

But he answered like nothing was wrong.

“Go ahead. If that means your painting will become even more magnificent.”

Paul relaxed the muscles around his lips like he was released from his build-up tension and lowered his head, but for some reason, Edgar didn’t make a smile

at all.

# Chapter 4 - The Spy from the Robin Hood Gang of Thieves

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“And, so, Lord Edgar, did you show him the sword?”

“I showed him. He was earnestly admiring it, but that was all.”

Remained standing in attention, Raven thought about that deeply. Edgar was leaning against the sofa’s armrest with his elbow.

“It could just be coincidental.”

“However, it would be valuable information if they could find out if the real sword was in this house and what kind of shape and design it has.”

Edgar mulled over if the threatening letter from the ‘Scarlet Moon’ ordering him to hand over the earl family sword and the fact that Paul wanted to take a look at it.

“That’s right. But Paul, doesn’t look like he is the type that can do a spy. His reaction when he saw the sword looked completely natural.”

When he was young, he was simple-minded and easily believed what people told him and was a young man whose face immediately showed what he was thinking.

He couldn’t think he had the acting ability that could deceive others.

Edgar believed that that part of him hadn’t changed, but who knows.

“No....., I’m fully aware, Raven. For an artist to be part of a secretive organization is almost a trend. I should decide more cautiously like you say.”

Large organizations would be the Freemasons and Rosicrucians. There were some nobles and educated scholars who held a seat in them. People from the outside only saw them as mysterious and severely creepy, and it was whispered in the shadows that they were plotting something unimaginable, but in truth, their anti-social sense of purpose was slim.

On the other hand, the really dangerous organizations would not surface into people’s rumors and manipulate society from behind the curtains.

If the 'Scarlet Moon' was a Robin Hood gang, then they would be heroes in the lower-parts of society. However, they only targeted dirty money that was connected to Prince. Which would mean, for someone who had a seat in that organization, they didn't see themselves as committing a crime, but more like they were fighting for their ideal.

It wouldn't be strange for someone pure like Paul to be mesmerized by that.

"The information we have on him so far is he was born in Kanata, his parents divorced when he was young and although he had been living with his mother, when she passed away he came back to England and taken in by his father and painter Andrew Foreman. While he was attending art school, his father retired from painting and is currently living in Dover. Since then, Paul has been living by himself in London. He is known as a person with good conduct and there are no bad rumors about him from the school he went to or his neighborhood and is dedicated in his artwork."

As he was listening, Edgar made a deep frown.

Raven saw that and stopped and silently waited for his master to speak.

"Andrew Foreman? Not O'Neill? ..... Well, it could just mean that Paul's father had a different name he used as a painter."

"There is no information about that in my investigation. If it was a painting signed by Mister Foreman, then there are a number of them, but none of them with O'Neill."

When Paul appeared, Edgar didn't mind that much that his last name had changed from when he knew him in the past. There are many cases when an artist or actor would change their name however they liked.

But according to Edgar's memory, his father was known as a painter by the name O'Neill.

"Then Raven, investigate about a painter named O'Neill."

If a painter named O'Neill existed and if he was the real painter that Edgar's father had hired to make paintings for his house, then Paul, who was suppose to be O'Neill's son, would currently be assuming a false name.

Perhaps from there, the possibility could arise that Paul was somehow connected to the 'Scarlet Moon.'

“Understood.”

“So, how about the Robin Hood gang?”

“Just as Lord Edgar had said, after I went around to a number of secondhand stores, there was someone who came to sell a violin.”

The police claimed that they searched all the doctors of London but there was no match of a man who came with his fingers cut-off. But, he was sure that the man’s injuries were being taken care of by a secret underground doctor or someone in the organization.

But Edgar imagined that if he lost four of his fingers, then he wouldn’t be able to play his violin any more.

“Did you confirm the violin?”

“Yes. There was a scar on it that I made when I fought with him. Only, the one who came to sell it was a fat, black-beard man, so he must have been asked to go sell it or something like that.”

“You weren’t able to identify that man.”

“Yes. All I found out was that he was dressed-well and wore a ring that had a red stone on it. That was all the store owner could remember.”

“....A ring with a red stone.”

“Since it was a secondhand store, the owner was quite familiar with gemstones and so was curious if it was a red moonstone.”

Moonstone; the scarlet ‘moon.’

“Lord Edgar, is there a red-colored moonstones?”

“Yes. There’s red, and white, and blue....”

As Edgar said that, he had a feeling like he saw a red moonstone somewhere recently.

But, he couldn’t remember when. He spent his days flying all over the ton and the number of people he met were endless. They were the kind of people that were accustomed to wear eye-catching gemstones.

There were sure to be a number of them that were stoutly built and black-haired.

As he was thinking, there was a sound of a knock. But, it wasn’t from the door, but from the window.

Raven opened the window and a gray-haired cat slipped into the room.

What kind of cat is there that can knock.

"Hello there, Nico, did you need something?"

"Can you call it quits and release Lydia? It's past the hour for her to go home, yet Mister artist is still absorbed in his work."

The cat that jumped up onto the sofa meowed his complaint as he leaned down onto it in a high and mighty attitude. Because he would act like that, he didn't seem like a cat.

But if Nico was still here, that would mean, thought Edgar.

"Raven, is Lydia still modeling for Paul?"

"Now that I think about it, yes."

"Look what time it is. Tell him to let her go home already."

Once Raven left the room, Nico let out a meow as if to call Edgar. And then, he stared at Edgar like he was blaming him.

"I happened to hear that Mister artist might be a spy? On top of that, he might be connected to that dance instructor from that incident?"

"Were you perhaps eavesdropping? Nico."

"Is it safe to let a man like that get near Lydia."

"Ahh, so you're worried about Lydia. It isn't like we are definitely sure that he is a spy, and there are the watchful eyes of the servants in this house, so they wouldn't be left alone."

Nico moved his neck, like he was saying what a bother.

Edgar lifted up his head after he became puzzled about something.

"Nico, are you perhaps talking like a human?"

"Meeoow."

His feline-like cry sounded like he was doing it on purpose.

He walked over to Nico who was on the sofa.

"Hey, do you think that Lydia trusts Paul more than me?"

"Compared to you, wouldn't anyone fall into the category of trustworthy?"

"Could she like him more than me."

"Don't ask me that."

".....Would she be hurt if he was a spy."

Even Nico grew silent to that.

“That’s why, Nico, you should advise Lydia that she should choose me. And while you are at it, you should let her know about Paul’s bad side. Isn’t it a good idea?”

“Ummm, even if the painter turned out to be a spy, I sort of have the feeling that he would still be more preferable than you would be.....”

Edgar grabbed ahold of Nico by the scruff of his neck while he was still talking.

“It’s best not to go against me.”

Raven came into the room that Paul was using to paint his art, and reminded him that it was late which made him rush to put down his brush.

He was the type to lose track of time when he got absorbed into something.

Although, Lydia was also thinking about something so she lost track of time as well. She was trying to think of a way to deal with the problem between the fairies once the ‘moon’ ring came off.

She wondered if there wasn’t a good idea that would drive away both the kelpie and the field fairies.

But in the end, she couldn’t come up with anything, and so Lydia knocked on the door of Edgar’s office so that she could go home. Because she asked Raven and he told her that Nico was there.

But instead of a reply, she heard a commotion like some sort of fight was going on. Surprised, Lydia whipped the door open and then a fluffy gray ball of fur came jumping into Lydia’s arms.

“Nico, what happened?”

“Bloody hell, that man is terrible! He trampled over my pride!”

There was a chair and lamp table that was lying on the floor on their side, probably from Nico who knocked them over while he was struggling to get away, and Edgar was still sitting down with those in between him and Lydia and gave her a smirk.

“Now, Edgar, what did you do to Nico.”

“I was just playing with him.”

He brushed off the gray hair that was stuck on his clothing as he stood up from the sofa.

"I said I'm not a cat, but he treated me like a bloody feline!"

"You seemed like you were enjoying it."

"I couldn't help it! This cat body would naturally respond...."

"This kind of sounds lewd."

"Don't be stupid! You bloody moron! Listen good, don't ever touch me, pet me and make me purr!"

Nico jumped down from Lydia's arms and bolted out of the room in an instant. But to be able to anger Nico who hates to be treated like a cat that much, must mean.

"You really are good in handling cats."

"I'm confident in how to handle women too."

Huh? Is he starting up again?

His fierce flirtatious attacks that had been dying down recently. But, by the time Lydia was feeling dangerous, Edgar was already standing right in front of her and obstructed Lydia from being able to move to go home.

He gazed down at Lydia from above like a hawk. It was a stance that was completely in hunting prey mode.

Why. Weren't you tired of me already?

"You don't have any duty to stay this late with Paul. If your return was late, Professor Carlton will be worried."

"Yes, today, I also had sort of forgotten how much time flew by."

"Was it that much fun?"

".....Yes, I guess so. He brought up many things to talk about so that I wouldn't grow bored."

"For example, what."

He sure was questioning today.

"Mostly about art. I'm free to talk about anything, aren't I?"

"What is that?"

It seemed Edgar spotted the card that Lydia was holding in her hand. It would be strange to hide it, so she held it up for him to see.

"Paul gave it to me. As thanks for being his model."

A flower of an iris was lightly painted on it. Paul's brush was not indecisive and



was quick and experienced which boldly reflected the lively power of the flower, and even though it was a card, it came out as a beautiful piece of art that captured anyone's eye.

"An iris, huh. That flower's message is the message of love. So it is a love letter to you."

"That's impossible. It was a flower that just happened to be close-by."

"What would you do if you were wrong?"

What I would do. As in my reply?

Or rather, I said I was so happy and accepted it gladly.

"If it were him, you wouldn't cry if he courted you."

Huh? What does that mean.....?

Before she realized what he meant, Lydia felt her face burn hot.

He saw her. How she acted on the night of the ball.

"I continued to think about why I made you cry, but I couldn't figure it out. Did I say something that hurt you? But why? What part?"

Even Lydia didn't know that. But for some reason she suddenly felt suffocated and unbearable.

She didn't want her heart to be confused and put out of order by Edgar's whims. And that made her angry so Lydia couldn't help but act defensive.

"It doesn't matter to you who I like. You said you would back down."

"That was a lie."

"What?"

"I said that to look pompous, but it wasn't what I was really thinking."

"You lie so easily like that, that's why I can't trust you."

"You're right, I can't count the number of times I have lied to you."

"Enough already, move aside."

However, he didn't move and remained blocking her path.

"But, you, you always forgive me. It was like that from the start. When you found out that I was a thief, you forgave me for trying to deceiving you. Because of how you were like that, I want you by my side. The crimes I committed won't disappear, but if you wouldn't run out on me, then I feel like I am forgiven for living with the earl name."

Lydia's heart flew up in her chest at his unusually serious tone of voice.

"You know about the rotten part of me. But you also understand the circumstances that left me no choice but to be that, right? This is how I really am, my true self that you said you didn't hate. From now on, I'm sure there will be secrets that I would have to carry on that I can't open up to anyone, but only you accepted my feelings with sincerity which I thought only my comrades who went through the same experience as me would understand. Couldn't just that be a reason for me to think of you as special? Do you consider this as not serious and a lie too?"

But he was a person who could easily say this even if he didn't mean it.

"Even if it isn't a lie, it isn't serious."

".....That hurts."

"There isn't serious love anywhere in you. The only thing that takes up your heart isn't women but your nemesis. Even if I was able to be useful by soothing and comforting your heart, it isn't love. It's just me being useful."

She was surely on the mark.

Even Lydia had learned her lesson a little. He would cleverly say anything in order to obtain what he thought was needed for him.

Even if his feelings of need wasn't a lie, it wasn't love.

"Couldn't this be friendship? I'm fine if I can be of any use. Even I am able to do work as a fairy doctor thanks to you. If we can be considerate and thoughtful to each other as friends, then we shouldn't need anything more than that. I want to believe that you aren't just using me as a simple useful tool."

However, he fixed his eyes hard at Lydia like he was still displeased.

"That goes against my principle. It's over when a man to be friends by a woman."

Huh?

Because of things like that about you, I'm not able to trust you more and more.

Oh, I can't take this anymore, she thought, and tried to slip by him but that rather irritated him and he placed his hands on either side of Lydia on the wall to stop her from going.

She had the feeling like he suddenly changed to a bad mood or more like he

was furious.

“Are you scared?”

But the tone of his voice that he hushed down to a whisper was a meltingly-sweet one.

Lydia wasn't sophisticated enough to realize he changed his tactics and so she was completely deceived and went into a panic.

“A-about what....?”

“You seemed scared of falling in love.”

She suddenly felt like she wanted to cry.

“To tell the truth, you appeared like that to my eyes on the night of the ball. If I chase after you too hard, it seemed like it would frighten you even more, and make you run-off, so I refrained myself, but I can't bear to watch you grow feelings for Paul at this rate.”

“.....Like I said, it isn't like that with Paul.”

Edgar had been keeping quiet for the past few days, but now it felt like everything that was bottle-up was now being released all at once like a open dam.

If I knew, I wouldn't have wanted him to refrain himself. Since she had let her guard down, now she was cornered.

It was embarrassing and blood was rushing to her face, which made Lydia not know what to do.

“Is the reason you don't open up because you were confessed by the extended part of a game when you were young?”

Oh, no, what'll I do.

“.....It's not like I'm scared of falling in love. I did fall in love once, although it was my one-sided feelings. But, it's impossible for love to happen between us. Because, if I were to love you, you would be troubled. Think about it, you would be troubled if I were to become serious and be completely enamored about you and follow you around, wouldn't you? I would be in the way even more once a marriage was brought up between a noble's daughter. However you look at it, there is no way you would sincerely accept a woman who grew serious about you when she doesn't suit you. That's why, if I was treated coldly, I might sell

off your secrets to the tabloids in revenge. That itself wouldn't be any good for you at all."

Lydia kept on talking like crazy. He made a slightly troubled face.

See, I thought so.

"I understand."

"If you understand, then get out of my way."

"You are indeed frightened. You want to think that it wouldn't work out from the beginning. That way, you wouldn't have to be disappointed."

It isn't disappointment.

Even at that time, when she was young, she knew from the start that she was the kind of girl to receive a love letter. She had the sense that it was some sort of prank.

Because to that boy, Lydia wasn't a human, but more like a fairy friend.

To get along with a girl who was rumored to be a changeling was like to secretly whisper with a fairy.

Since friends in your dreams aren't real, she was someone who he was able to easily open up his troubles with.

There was no way that you would feel all right when a dream stepped out into your reality. He probably didn't want Lydia, who knew his weakness, to speak to him in front of people.

And yet she misinterpreted that and troubled him.

Even though she should have been aware of her role. She thought that maybe, she might be able to get closer to friends in reality.

If she were to be frightened of something, it would be to be influenced and disordered by lies.

If she made the mistake of the distance that she shouldn't mistaken, then Edgar was sure to be displeased and annoyed.

"It isn't that I don't want to be disappointed, I just don't want to mistake the distance that should be between me...."

"What is that, distance? That can be changed however much you want, and you can change if you wanted to, can't you?"

She realized that Edgar was inching closer to Lydia.

“Like, for example our distance right now, we can make this normal for us.”

He whispered in a hush to her as he placed his hands on her shoulders. Lydia felt pressed up against the wall and couldn't budge.

“No, let go....”

She tried to push him away but he grabbed that arm of hers and pressed his lips on her wrist right in front of her eyes.

Lydia shivered at the shock of being suddenly having her bare skin touched.

“Uh, my lord,”

Just then, the timid voice that interrupted them was from Paul who was standing in the doorway that was left open.

Lydia felt saved and relieved, but that was only for a moment, as Edgar's eyes remained fixed onto her and calmly replied as he caressed her hair like he was playing with it.

“We're currently in the middle of something, so would you shut the door and get out.”

Huh, Huuhhh?

“But, uh....”

“I'm just having an in-depth chat with Lydia.”

This is a chat?

She wanted to cry out to Paul to wait, but since a pair of ash mauve eyes were right in front of her, she hesitated to open her mouth.

And she didn't know if Paul would have the courage to go against Edgar when he was told to get out of the room. Oh, no, what will I do; Lydia was in such a panic that she couldn't let out her voice.

“But, Lydia is trembling, my lord.”

Paul made the bold step of cautioning him.

Edgar made a deep frown. His face wasn't one that looked like he was in outrage, but more saddened and painful.

Like he was tired, he let go of Lydia.

“What a gallant knight. It looks like he came to rescue you.”

“My lord, I wasn't....”

“You're free to go home. Our chat is over.”

He waved his hands like he was dismissing them, and he shut himself up in his room.

Lydia returned to her house in a dazed state, then dashed into her room and sat down onto her bed without even turning on the lamp light.

That was so frightening. I'm still shivering.

She felt like there was still Edgar's warmth was still lingering on her shoulders and hair.

"What was he thinking!"

Even if she screamed out loud, she couldn't shake it off.

She tried to think of it as a practical joke? that went a little out of control than usual, but normally, he acted more frivolous, not like today where he didn't allow her any chance to run away.

And for some reason, he seemed a in a bad mood.

If the cause of that was because she received the iris card from Paul, then that was such a selfish possessiveness and Lydia let out a sigh.

Edgar just didn't like the fact of a woman who was by his side to become friendly with another man.

She was sure of that.

But Paul didn't have the feelings for Lydia that Edgar could make a fuss and be angered over.

Even just now, for him to step up and go against an earl to help Lydia was more for Edgar's sake.

Paul escorted Lydia to the carriage parked in front of the entrance door as she was still trembling and said to her without hiding his righteous indignation.

He claim beforehand that he was in no position to put his mouth in Edgar's matter of flirting with a woman [But if he isn't serious, then I think he had gone too far towards a lady like you. He should know that commoners find it difficult to go against the wish of someone who has a higher title than them.]

Of course, it wasn't like Lydia couldn't make a run for it because he brought up their relationship of the difference in their social position and the fact that she was hired by him. To begin with, she didn't see Edgar as an earl when he was suspicious from the first place and continued to talk to him like an equal.

But, for Paul who felt like that, it wasn't like he went out to protect Lydia, but more like he wanted to have Edgar remain as a noble gentleman.

Like he didn't want Edgar to be a man who would force his way on a pure young woman ranked below him by any mistake.

Even if he thought Edgar was different from the young son of the ducal family, he must have been seeing them as the same some where deep inside.

Which means, the reason he was being kind towards Lydia, could perhaps be he saw her as a woman who was specially treated by Edgar?

""Well, that would be how it would be normally," she murmured in a sigh.

"Oi, Lydia, aren't you going to eat dinner?"

Nico peered in through the doorway. Ever since he came home, he stood in front of the mirror and ferociously fixed and combed his fur coat, but once dinner was ready, it looked like his mood got better.

However, Lydia's mood didn't recover. She held her knees as she sat on her bed and replied "I'm not hungry."

"Fine, then" quickly said the cold-hearted fairy cat.

In the carriage on their way home, he asked Lydia who didn't speak a word 'if she was also petted around by the earl?' which made her temper grew worse and so she tied a not in his tail. That must have been why he wasn't approaching her.

He waved his fluffy tail in the air from side-to-side and trotted down the stairs on his hind legs.

Wasn't he going to offer to cheer her up? Lydia grew tired and angry at everything.

She felt the bumping beat of her pulse with her hand as she touched her wrist and grew irritated when she imagined that that sound was felt by his lips.

"Hey there, I heard you won't have dinner, did you eat something and upset your stomach?"

This time, Kelpie came in through her second-story window. Now that she remembered, Edgar had tricked him into eating liver, so she wondered if he had any problems.

Lydia hoped that he would have gotten food poisoning and went off running

back to his country home as she replied to him.

“Wouldn’t that be you.”

“Geesh, it took me hours to get the poison out of me. It wouldn’t take time at all if I were in the Highland waters, as the waters here are polluted.”

As she thought, organs were bad for kelpies.

Even if he had a human form, he still was tall and had a strong build, but he cleverly slipped his body through the small window. He leaned up against the window sill and set his seductive eyes at Lydia.

Knowing that his eyes had that sort of enchanting power and that they were unrelated to his will, she didn’t feel that much uncomfortable as compared to Edgar’s eyes.

“Were you diving in the Thames River?”

“Don’t be stupid. How could a fairy great as I live in a filthy river like that. I was at the lake at that park.”

Guessing from the direction he was pointing to, it must be Hyde Park. If she recalled, it had quite a large lake.

“That doesn’t matter but, I’m in a bad mood right now. Go home before I throw the Bible at you.”

“Why are you in a bad mood? Ahh, is it that. The time of the month when human females grow most irritated....”

She threw a cushion that was near her but he caught it with ease.

“Don’t get so grumpy. I’ll give you something good.”

Something good from a kelpie was bound to be a fresh pig’s head or a sheep’s heart, which I’d die than take.

He held out his fist faced up in front of Lydia’s eyes as she made a frown and opened his hand.

A yellow ball of fluff was in his hand and it moved as it ruffled its wings and snapped its black beady eyes to look over at Lydia.

“What, a chick? How adorable....”

Lydia couldn’t help but loosen up her cheeks.

“I found it.”

“Where?”



“In a barn shed in the outskirts of the city.”

I don't think you can call that finding it.

“.....You ate there.”

“I just had a few chickens. I'll let you know, since you don't like it, I'm holding back on eating humans.”

Even Kelpie needed to eat. And yet, ever since he got to know Lydia, he had been refraining from eating people, so in a way, he could be quite faithful.

“You didn't eat this little one.”

“It's too small. It's too much work to try to take out its organs.”

He plunked it down into Lydia's palm. She cradled it with both her hands and found that its fluffiness calmed her down and put her mind at peace.

“How does it feel?”

He sat down next to her and curiously looked down at Lydia as she caressed the little chick.

Most likely, he had a difficult time understanding how it felt to love and tenderly cherish another creature.

“It's warm and soft and makes me feel kind.”

“You don't feel like you want to eat it.”

“It makes me want to protect it. I want to communicate with it and stay with it and if it disappeared, I'd feel lonely and sad.”

“Hmmm, so it's the same as this.”

Kelpie scratched Lydia's head, making her hair crumpled and out-of-place.

Am I something like a chick?

But for a waterhorse, maybe humans, whose lifespan was short and had no strength and magic, were something like that.

And this kelpie wanted to keep that kind of small, weak creature by his side so he must really be strange and different as a waterhorse.

“For some strange reason, I don't feel like I want to eat you. And, it's boring if I don't see you.”

“Boring? Aren't waterhorses not as talkative as you are?”

“Well, even I'm silent when I'm in the water. Since there is no one to talk to. But if you come with me, then we can always talk to each other.”

He put his arm around Lydia's shoulder in a friendly manner.

But, it didn't seem rude or unpleasant enough for her to shake him away.

If it were Edgar, she would never be able to remain this quiet and still.

Lydia had grown up in contact with fairies more than humans, and as a waterhorse as also a fairy, she must have not felt that much resistance against him.

What humans were thinking was hard for Lydia to understand, but she could tell what a fairy was thinking. At the least, she knew that if Kelpie deceive Lydia in order to eat her, he would use his magic than words or behavior.

"Hey, did that earl say some stinging remark at you?"

Lydia knew that he wasn't thinking of anything under this attitude of wanting to cheer her up and so she was able to remain relieved.

"I told you to stop working under that man and hurry up and marry me."

Oh, yes, he really says it like its nothing.

There were humans who fell in love with fairies and chose that kind of life and left the human realm, but Lydia still had something she was fixated on this side. She had her father. She had the dream of wanting to carry on after her mother as a fairy doctor. She still thinks that there are many wonderful, great things in the human world.

"You think I'm persistent, don't you? Well, putting that aside, why not the two of us go back to Scotland? Jumping around in the grass lands where there are lots and lots of fairies suits you better than getting dressed up in this human-filled city."

Even she thought so.

"But, I want to become a fully-fledged fairy doctor. I can't always be hanging around only with fairies."

"You'd get tired dealing with humans. All fairy doctors do. Even if they were human, they are close to fairies. And humans can't see fairies, so as long as there are no problems, they are quick to forget about fairies, and their appreciation towards fairy doctors. From long ago, I hear that there are many fairy doctors who leave the human realm and live in the fairyland."

According to legend, people who have the ability to become fairy doctors would

be those who had fae blood running in them or either be a changeling. She wondered which one she was.

Did she have to continue living in the human realm not able to fit-in since her ties with fairies were so strong.

She wonder how it was for her mother.

But her mother had her father. That's why she spent her whole life in the human world.

Lydia still didn't know where her future was heading.

She wondered if some day, she was going to give up with the human world and go to the fairy realm.

"It's takes no time for you humans to die, so you shouldn't be wasting your time in this dirty city."

For a immortal fairy, a few decades was indeed no time at all, but for a human, it was quite a lifetime.

And yet, Lydia was cheered up by how the kelpie innocently talked to her.

When she was touched by the water fairy, she felt wrapped in a slightly cold but clear and pure presence.

Like the dirt and filth that remained in her body was being washed away.

He was a waterhorse that possessed a ferocious quality to him, but since they only lived in clean water, they are said to have the power to clean and purify the waters. That's why the rivers and lochs they lived in were praised for being filled with clear waters and the people and animals were indebted to their favor.

When she was with fairies, she would have the thought that the structure and way of thinking in the human world were all a one-sided way of looking at things. To categorize the kelpies as evil fairies was the humans forcefully changing it so as convenient for them.

Then, she thought she shouldn't be upset when something upsetting happened or she was burdened with a trouble or made mistakes in the human world.

If she grew tired, then the fairyland would warmly welcome her into theirs.

"You actually are quite a good fellow."

Kelpie, who is a wicked creature but straight-hearted and Edgar, who is a

human yet is made up of lies.

If you looked at them individually, it was clear that Edgar was the worse of the two.

However, because he was human, he went back and forth between good and evil. The thing that was difficult to understand about

Edgar was the two sides that he went wave around in was extremely different. He was aware of that himself as he periodically made a disturbed, painful expression, and so, at those kinds of times, Lydia saw him, who was usually arrogant, the same as the little chickling in the palm of her hand.

She felt the desire that if only she could cradle him and warm him up.

But he said that he didn't need friends. He claimed that he needed Lydia, and yet in truth, he might just be joking around and thinking of her only as someone to play around with to pass the time.

She heard the clomping sound of footsteps coming up the stairs. She realized Kelpie was no where in sight.

The one who knocked on her room door was her father who had just arrived home.

"Lydia, is there someone there with you? I heard voices..."

"Oh, no, father, it was just a fairy. It's gone now."

"I heard you didn't want to eat."

"Yes....., I wasn't that hungry. But, maybe I could take a few bites. Since you are at the table."

As she stood up, she released the chick onto the table that had the milk and biscuits set out for the hobgoblin that resided in their home.

The hard-working hobgoblins immediately came out and surrounded the little creature.

"Please look after this little one."



Paul pointed out that Lydia was trembling and he didn't back down at that time.

If he entered the earl residence in order to search around the grounds, then he would have avoided doing something that would upset Edgar's temper.

Which means, Paul is indeed unrelated to the “Scarlett Moon?”

Or did his sense of justice overpower his urge to complete his mission.

As Edgar was fumbling that over in his head, he quickly overwhelmed with self-hate and let out a sigh.

“Is something the matter?”

Raven, who was sitting near the door, looked over to him as he asked.

Beyond the glass window, the hustle and bustle of people who crowded the Oxford Street passed by.

He wanted to organize his thoughts on if Paul was connected to the Robin Hood gang, but however much he started a new train of thought, the image of Lydia’s face would pop up.

“Just a little something.”

He felt remorse for making Lydia tremble in his arms, but Edgar had sensed the presence of Paul near at that time, and in order to see how he would move, he purposefully didn’t let Lydia go.

On the other hand, he was irritated at her for continuing to reject him and had a feeling like things would have turned ugly if he didn’t stop himself.

There was a cold side of him who was calculating Lydia’s worth and an emotional part of him who was just seeking for Lydia.

It would be troublesome for him if Lydia who had left him and so it would of course be best to build a friendship between them as she wished, but the proposal of that idea only upsetted him, so there was nothing else he could do.

“Raven, there’s no doubt that I’m using Lydia for my benefit, and yet I wonder why I don’t want her to think that I am.”

“How do you want her to think of her?”

“Like, I’m deeply in love with her so I don’t want to let her go at all costs.”

“Wouldn’t that be impossible at this point.”

That’s why I’m troubled, thought Edgar as he crossed his arms. No matter how much he said that, Lydia wouldn’t believe him.

“Sir, are you serious about that?”

“Yes, I don’t want to let her go at all.”

“No.....I didn’t mean about that.”

"If I'm deeply in love? The problem is if everything would turn out wonderful if that were seriously the case, then I can get serious."

Like he didn't understand, Raven tilted his head.

"But, Lydia wouldn't approve of that kind of seriousness."

It will always be my one-sided feelings. Said Edgar, as he breathed out those words in a sigh.

"I've never heard of that kind of serious love."

There was a voice that shouldn't have belonged in the carriage.

"I can't believe you. I knew I couldn't leave Lydia in your hands."

On the seat in front of him, the one who faintly appeared was a young man with wavy jet-black hair.

Edgar stopped Raven with only a glance as he was about to react.

"Mr. Kain, if you have business with me, then you would need to go through my butler first."

"Human rules don't apply to me. And besides, Lydia just wants to become a fairy doctor and doesn't care about you at all. Don't misunderstand that."

"Wasn't your proposal refused by her? At least, I haven't been denied yet."

"I don't consider myself refused. Humans quickly grow old and incompetent and they come to hate each other and kill each other and deceive one another. If one was a fairy doctor, then eventually they are sure to choose a life with fairies than those kinds of creatures."

"You were a kelpie, was that right. Don't you eat humans? I would think even Lydia would have her guard up so that she wasn't eaten by accident."

"I would never eat her. A kelpie's will is strong."

"What a waste. I would want to taste Lydia."

Kelpie didn't hide his frown.

"You....., even though you're a human. Are you a pervert?"

Edgar chuckled and raised his eyes.

"Why do you have feelings for Lydia? Isn't against the nature of a water horse to have feelings for a human?"

"It's because she doesn't fear me. Of course, she sees me as dangerous since I'm a water horse. But, she sees me not as my species, but just as myself. Even if

I get near her and talk to her, she doesn't run away. I never met a human like that."

"Then you were cut-off and lonely till you met Lydia."

"Lonely? Water horses are like that. We don't group even with our own kind and live in solitude."

"But, you met her and discovered the comfort of being accepted by others. And so, you came to want her all for yourself."

Kelpie stared back at him, like he was observing inside his heart. He had such beautiful, black pearl eyes.

His inhuman and devilish shine shared a quality with Lydia's golden-green eyes. Like they saw passed anything, which made you feel that there was no use in hiding anything, hence, put you in a relax.

"So you know."

"I'm the same. She didn't fear what I had done in the past. She wasn't swayed by the label that society would put on someone like me, but listened to what I had to say and pitied me. She helped me. She helped me remember the human part of me that no one should lose. As long as I have Lydia, I believe that I would remain relatively decent from now on as well."

"Ohh, so you're the type of human doomed for hell."

Kelpie made a devilishly happy smirk. It made one dizzy, perhaps that was his magic as a fae. Now that I remember, his kind doesn't choose and eats both man and woman. So men are also influenced by this mysterious beauty as well. He's like the finest of statues. No wonder people who want to get their hands on them and set them in traps.

"Lord Edgar!"

Raven shouted out to him and placed his hand on Edgar's shoulder. In his other hand, he pointed a knife in the middle of Kelpie's brow.

"Don't get all steamed up, little boy. ....No, is that a snake? Or is it a bird?"

Once Kelpie pulled back, Edgar's body suddenly felt lighter, like he was released from a bounding spell.

"I'm all right, Raven."

Whispered Edgar, as he made his valet pull back his knife.

“You could say that. Although I don’t believe in hell. ....That’s why, Mr. Kain, I have no intention of letting her free. That is definitely certain.”

The black fae laughed with a hmph.

“Challenge accepted.”

After Kelpie disappeared, the carriage stopped not long after.

The place Edgar came to was the University College, a London university.

He stepped off of the carriage, and headed alone to the building where Carlton worked.

There was something he wanted to ask and discuss with him, so he had the professor open up his schedule between his private lessons.

He was guided by one of the college staff and when he reached the laboratory, Carlton, who had his hair untidy as he wore his spectacles, which made him more like a general office handyman more than a professor.

“Welcome, my lord. Pardon this room for being in such a state of chaos,” said Carlton as he slipped through a tall stack of paperwork and his desk, but the hem of his coat was caught on his chair and made the mountain of papers crashing down with a loud noise.

“Ahhh, now, I really shouldn’t have stacked all of these books on top of each other... Oh, my lord, please don’t be bothered. Please, have a seat.”

He finally realized that there was another pile of paperwork that crowded on top of the sofa for guests and rushed to move them aside.

His manner and movements were so clumsy and disordered that unless his assistant Langley, who had been in the next room, didn’t quickly give a hand, he was sure to make that pile of papers come crashing down yet again.

“Uh, so then, you said you have something to discuss, did Lydia cause any sort of trouble?”

It seemed like the reason behind his restless behavior was because he was worried that Edgar might have come to complain about his daughter.

“Oh, no, Miss Carlton is brilliant in her work. My business was not in that regards, professor, I came to ask you about a certain gemstone.”

Hearing jewel, Carlton’s smile crumbled.

Mineralogy was his area of specialty. Just like Lydia would call him a



mineralogy-mania, his face instantly switched the serious face of a scholar.

“It’s regarding moonstones; I heard that they actually wax and wane like the real moon.”

The reason why he was interested in learning about moonstones was because he felt like the gemstone was related to the name of Blue Knight Earl.

Long ago, the earl was said to have made a promised marriage with a fairy queen [if he was given the moon.] And the thing that the queen had found was a white moonstone that was claimed to wax and wane like the moon itself.

The thought that came by Edgar’s head about how the Blue Knight Earl said that cliché, was that perhaps in truth, he just said it in order to refuse the marriage.

And the other moon; the Robin Hood gang called the Scarlett Moon. If that name came from the red moonstone, then the question of why it had to be a moonstone arose.

He wondered what kind of meaning there was behind ‘moon’ that they, who apparently couldn’t tolerate an imposter, posing as the Blue Knight Earl had.

Perhaps, the moonstone could be deeply related to the Blue Knight Earl.

However, Edgar didn’t know a thing about the earl family, where the family estate was in the fairyland, if it really existed and how all the lords of the family had dealt with the fairies.

“The light inside the moonstone is created by the reflection of two different types of minerals that overlap each other with one extremely thin layer on top of another. It is a terribly delicate construction process, so for example, by the light of the full moon and the light of a dark crescent moon, the light of that reflection might appear different.”

“So, it really is just a matter of impression, and its lighting isn’t actually shifting.”

“How knows. But if I were to say that, being in a position as one who goes after the truth behind the construction process and constitution, then that would be quite an unbelievable story much like agreeing that there is a certain type of diamond that is cursed. However, from ages ago, there are people who believe that a moonstone exists that really does wax and wane like the moon.”

For example, continued Carlton, as he searched in the back of his mind.

“A popular story, is that the Pope Leo X from the Middle Ages had a mysterious moonstone like that.”

“Are there other stories like that?”

“To tell the truth, it is no exaggeration when I say there are as many as you wish. Just like its name, the moonstone is a gemstone that was thought to shift its form along with the moon or that it is a particle of the moon itself. The mind’s eye of people have been gazing at moonstones as a stone, though each to a different degree, which light waxes and wanes.”

Which means, the thing that was wished by the Blue Knight Earl, and found by the fairy queen, was just a stone that possessed a high degree in its fine reflective light amongst all the moonstones and didn’t have any kind of magical power.

He was checking the stone that was fixed onto Paul’s finger everyday, but there still was time until the next full moon. The width of the shine was only a degree that one could maybe agree was getting wider to one’s eyes.

After a thought-over, Edgar continued on.

“Professor, you know all about the legendary gemstones from all times and places. Even if it was the stone that was secretly possessed by the genie from Arabian Knights, wouldn’t you be able to decipher what kind it was from a mineralogist point of view?”

“It’s more like a hobby of mine.”

“Oh, no, there is no one else who is doing the same thing, so there is quite some worth in what you are doing.”

And, so, he was going to get to his real business.

“Actually, I am thinking that one of my ancestors in the earl family was looking for such a moonstone that waxes and wanes like that. I don’t know what the purpose was.”

“Perhaps it was to search for a marriage partner?” chuckled Carlton, in a some what embarrassed manner.

“Since moonstones are said to be stones that keep the bonds of love together.”

“I didn’t know that. Does mineralogy research such romantic aspects as well?”

“Oh, no, no, I just happened to hear this. In the past, my wife wanted a

moonstone for her wedding ring.... Ah, pardon, I'm shifting the topic. Uhh, you wanted to know about....."

"Oh, no, professor, you told me such a wonderful story. I dream that I could present a moonstone to the woman I love someday."

After he made a smile and said that, Carlton suddenly made a frightened face.

"My lord, you're still so young, you don't have to rush. I'm sure there are plenty of women for you, and there could be the case that you might regret it if you rush into it....."

"Isn't it more about each other's feelings than age?"

His frantic reaction is so humorous, thought Edgar inappropriately.

"Is there such a lady you know of?"

"I was just generally speaking."

Like he was relieved, he wiped the sweat off his forehead.

"But, professor, it must be worrisome for you for having such an adorable daughter. There might be a man who would show up one day and win her heart with just one romantic gemstone."

Carlton went frozen for a moment.

And when he came to, he forced the topic back on track.

"Ahh, now that I remember, my lord, in regards to marriage partners. One of your ancestors, the Lady who appears in the story about Lord Blue Knight, doesn't she supposedly resemble the moonstone itself, if I can recall."

That was unexpected news.

Of course, Edgar had also read the story about Lord Blue Knight many times. However, he had no recollection about a moonstone coming out.

"The Lord's Lady, you mean, the master archer that was said to be his guardian fairy."

There were two guardian fairies that were masters of archery. One of them was supposedly his wife.

As he nodded, Carlton took out a book from a bookcase and flipped through its pages.

It was the well-read book which had the Lord Blue Knight as its main character and written in the Elizabethan era. It was a story that was filled with fairy

episodes popular at the time, and even though it was based on an actual person, people now generally consider it a fabrication. Even if it was true that the ancestor of the Ashenbert earl family, Lord Blue Knight did in fact take an active part as the knight of the King of England and promoted to earl, but the part about fairies coming out and magic being used was difficult to take seriously.

In any case, since Lydia knew fairies, she said it couldn't all be fiction.

"Was I able to convince you that a master archer represents the moon?"

I see. The goddess of the moon Diana was the goddess of hunt. I wonder if it is because the crescent moon resembles a bow. The moon and bow were periodically used with the same meaning in literature and paintings from the old ages.

"And the moon also represents as a high rank within the fairies. The guardian fairy's name was also thought to be given with the image of the moon."

"Name, .....the Lady fairy was Gwendolen, the other was Flandolen."

"In Gale, they mean white bow, scarlett bow."

"In other words, white moon and scarlett moon....."

"Both are colors of the moonstone. In regards to Flandolen, there are tales that she was the child of Lord Blue Knight, and from the description that they had been wearing those gemstones, then wouldn't you think that there is no other suitable one than the moonstone for them."

Ah, that's it.

In the past, the earl who had given the condition [if you would give me the moon] for the marriage with the field fairy queen, must have remembered about the guardian fairies of his ancestor in his head when he said that.

Edgar wondered if the earl was really looking for a marriage partner or if it was necessary to find a relative of the guardian fairy.

However, all of that was now in the far past.

It was impossible to know if the moonstone ring on Paul's finger originally belonged to Gwendolen or not, and even if that were so, since the fairy with that name no longer exists, the queen only found just the ring.

The thing that was related to Edgar right now, was the 'Scarlett Moon.'

If the Robin Hood gang who sent him the death letter, called themselves 'Scarlett Moon' based off this story, then that would mean they considered themselves the guardians of the Blue Knight Earl.

That's why they wouldn't bear an imposter. So they came up with the idea of getting back the sword.

However, what was their connection with Prince?

For a gang who opposed Prince, what was the meaning of calling themselves by the name of the archer of the Blue Knight Earl?

It was Edgar's personal job to investigate that.

Edgar stood up.

"Thank you very much, Professor. You were a great help."

"I'm glad I could be of use."

As they shook hands, he suddenly thought up of something he wanted to ask Lydia's father.

"Professor, would it be all right if I ask you another question?"

"Yes, of course."

"I heard that your wife was a fairy doctor. Did you need courage to love a woman who could see things that could not be seen?"

Like she could see through everything, your truth and weakness, however much you tried to cover that up.

"I had taken my wife away from her home island by my wish and taken her away from her close fairy friends. Ripping her away from the destiny that was bound for her there. I had taken away so much, and yet I think I was only able to give her so little in place of that. ...Oh, goodness, I went off track again, but, isn't there no need of courage to love someone? Isn't it just something that you can't fight against and fall into?"

He replied to Edgar with a calm smile.

Edgar was surprised and didn't suspect that he had eloped. Carlton didn't look at all like the madly romantic type.

"I'm sure for anyone, that time would come unexpectedly. Even if you don't have courage, it would just be natural for us to step out into a dangerous path. At that time, I prepared myself for something. Just like I had taken away my

wife from her family, Lydia would eventually find someone more important than me. But I think that has to be a natural choice for Lydia so much that she wouldn't even have to think or worry about it."

Edgar thought he was beat.

Carlton was somewhat clumsy and good-hearted by nature, but he was a sharp, quick-witted man.



And he softly made a declaration to Edgar.

It was useless for him to approach Lydia on a whim of a feeling.

If he was told that, Edgar was more like the type to have his urge to take up a fight heightened. That was the case when he was crossing glares with Kelpie.

But right now, unexpectedly, it made him depressed.

There were plenty of ways to keep Lydia from running off. If that meant he needed to become serious about her, he arrogantly thought that, sure, he could be serious.

But it was like that enthusiasm and scheme was easily pulled out by the root, which surprisingly just made Edgar simply want to see Lydia.

She had commuted to work to the earl family house today as well, but she locked herself in her office and didn't even open the door for Edgar.

Even if he deserved it, it looked like she wasn't going to talk to him for a while.

That was no that big of a deal. For Lydia, the job of a fairy doctor was important, and even if the reason was that she couldn't allow herself to take a day off of work, so he thought that he wasn't completely rejected by her.

He had the confidence that he could make yesterday's ordeal be swept under the carpet.

But, even if he was able to do that, he realized that didn't mean it would make Lydiaremain by his side on her own will.

He sensed that he quite, really liked Lydia, and yet, he felt he was rebuffed and dismissed in that he was missing something conclusive.

## Chapter 5 - The Released Archer's Arrow

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At the bottom of the large lake in the park, the jet-black water horse that had been laying down, opened its eyes.

It was still the time when the early-morning mist was clinging to the ground. There was hardly any presence of people in the park.

He rised up onto the water surface still in his water horse form and like he was combing his graceful mane, he made soft ripples as he gently swam.

The water birds that noticed his presence flew off all at once into the sky.

“I’m hungry,” he mumbled.

He didn’t want to eat the squirrels that were scuffling through the bushes around there. However, large animals in London were either humans or horses. He wondered if it was all right to eat a horse, but most cases a human would be riding it, so it would be difficult to go and attack one.

“I guess I could grab a pig by the bay...”

Just when he stepped up onto the land, he heard the voice of someone talking. Kelpie was surprised at the human’s early morning walk in the park as he hid his presence like the trees and grass in his surroundings.

The humans who couldn’t see him would walked over to his direction without any caution at all and stopped in their tracks in the spot where the small many paths in the park gathered together.

It was the perfect opportunity for a hunt, but since he had chose not to eat, he decided to hurry up and leave that area. What made him stop was because he was familiar with one of the faces of the two figures.

It was that male painter who got in the way when he wanted to give the ‘moon’ ring to Lydia. On his right hand, the ring still lay secure on one of his fingers.

“Kill, the earl?”

He heard the painter say that.

My, oh, my, humans never change. But for Kelpie who thought that, a human



being killed by another didn't mean anything to him, but if the earl they were talking about meant that bloody annoying human youngster, then there was no way he couldn't not be curious.

The other man made a fist with only his forefinger pointing up like he was shhing.

"What are you saying. That man is the Blue Knight Earl. Isn't he the one who stands as head of our association, the "Scarlett Moon"? Wasn't the purpose of me to get into the earl house to reveal about our association to him and accept us?"

"That man is an imposter. He is not the Blue Knight Earl that we have been waiting for."

"But, he had the jeweled sword. I made sure and checked it, and it was real. The painting from three hundred years ago, that our association has been carefully looking over, that has the picture of the Blue Knight Earl of the time and the sword, is the only proof we have. There was no mistake, his sword was exactly the same as the one in the painting."

"I know. At the present time, the only ones who can confirm if it is the real sword of the Blue Knight Earl is the Royal Family, the College of Arms and us. That's why, when I heard your report, Mister made his decision. That man is an imposter and it is unforgivable that he even stole the sword as well."

"How can you be sure that he is really an imposter? Hasn't no one seen the descendant of the Blue Knight Earl who has been absent for three-hundred years?"

"But, Paul, you've seen that young Asian lad who works in the earl house. That lad had been going through training as an assassin to be the slave of Prince. I was told from ours that, however his memory was fuzzy, he remembers that face. It wasn't just him, a number of our men who we took in after they escaped from Prince's organization claimed they knew that Asian."

"Prince's.....?"

"Yes, in order to be sure of it, Mike went in posing as a dance instructor. He went out of bounds and now is in that state though, but we're now sure that he isn't any ordinary house servant. And I hear that the white slave that Prince

particularly favored was a blond-haired beautiful boy, and however you see it, those two are Prince's dogs who were sent from America ordered to steal the Blue Knight Earl's sword."

Kelpie didn't quite understand, but as he was listening to their story he got the part about Edgar not being related in blood to the Blue Knight Earl but tilted his head in confusion at why that would make them believe he was an imposter. He thought since the man had the sword that held the magic of fairies, that should be enough to say he was real.

Besides, there are only two types of humans, those who can interact with fairies and those who can't.

However the painter was surprised at something else than the fact that the earl was an imposter.

"What, the earl is working under Prince? Why didn't you tell me this before!"

"You're quick to show what you're thinking on your face. You were able to successfully pull through this mission without them being suspicious of you because you believed that he was the real Blue Knight Earl, weren't you? Thanks to your lack of malice towards the earl, we anticipated that you would be able to obtain his trust and sent him the threat letter and try to put them in confusion."

"You said that the man named Prince was the leader of the organization who killed my father...."

"That's why we needed you to do one more job as a member of the [Scarlett Moon]."

"Are you saying I have to kill someone?"

"He is the henchman of the devil. Don't think him as human. You know plenty already, the man named Prince will use any means in order to get what he wants. I don't know if he wants to become king of the underside of society or if he's after something more unimaginable. But we must stop that by all means."

The man continued on his heated conviction.

"Listen, Paul, once this is over, we're going to have to live overseas until things cool down. Didn't you say you wanted to learn in Italy? We have the money

prepared in order to do that.”

The painter looked completely confused, and nodded in a half-hearted manner. “You have been worshipping that imposter as earl. That man must have taken somewhat of precautions when you said you wanted to see the sword, but he was sure to not have sensed anything suspicious in your actions.” “But, if they have investigated about my origins and found something questionable....”

“They would never suspect anything. We used all of organization’s power to erase your past and made you as the son of Mister Foreman. However much they investigate about you, there is nothing to link you to your father who was killed by Prince. Unless he knew you from the past.”

That man slapped the worrisome Paul’s shoulder as if to snap him back in shape.

“Prince has killed every last one of those who got in his way. There is no way that his young henchman would know anything about O’neill who was one of those men killed eight years ago.”

“But....”

“Is there still something?”

“I think I may have angered the earl. No, uh, I haven’t had a chance to talk to him since, so I don’t know how he feels about it. But, yes, he usually is an open-hearted, forgiving man, but I couldn’t help myself since the earl was forcing himself onto a young girl from a different class.”

“Paul, .....that man is already a famous lady’s man in London’s ton.

The reason he is quite open-hearted about things is because he only has an interest in women. What are you thinking in trying to steal his woman! It hasn’t been that long since it has been forbidden but they are the kind of people who perform duels, and the most common causes for those are women!”

“No, uh, it wasn’t like I was trying to steal.... And I could never be able to do a duel.”

“Are you an idiot! Why would a noble have a duel with a commoner! He would just shoot you on the spot.”

The man was apparently appalled at the painter who commented that he

wasn't killed on the spot at that time and dropped his head into his hands. However, he must have thought of something, as he lifted up his head.

"I know, if we go with that, then it would be harder for him to consider you as a spy. Yes, so go ahead and apologize so that the two of you are back on good terms. He will let his guard down with you. Aim when you are alone together."

The man took out a small medicine bin from inside his coat. He shoved it into the still hesitant painter's hand and quickly walked away.

The painter, who was left alone, looked down at the thing in his hand for a while. Then, he finally lethargically moved his arm to put it in his pocket, but perhaps because he was shaking, he dropped the medicine bin.

"Ah."

He gasped as his eyes trailed after it which tumbled down to drop into the lake. Suddenly, the painter turned around in his tracks and tried to run away from that spot. He didn't have the courage to throw away the medicine bin himself, but he must have grabbed this lucky chance and escape from his duty.

Hey, weren't you going to kill the earl.

And things were finally starting to get interesting, thought the kelpie as he scooped up the medicine bin in the water and appeared himself in front of the painter.

"You dropped this."

He looked up at him with terrified eyes, perhaps because a water horse had appeared before him or that he appeared with the medicine bin and faced with his duty once again.

"Do it right."

Once the kelpie stared at him with his eyes filled with magic, the hatred of Edgar as the killer of his parent bubbled up inside the painter.

The painter timidly took the bin from Kelpie and walked away with heavy feet, but he had a strong grip on the bin, never to drop it again.

Now, thought the kelpie, having the painter kill the earl was a good thing, but he was worried about the effect on Lydia who was near the two of them.

It was a problem if Lydia was involved in this happening by some mistake.

If it was her, and there was some sort of ruckus between the earl and the

painter, then she was sure to put herself in.

“Tsk, this is no time to be looking for a bite to eat. Oh, geesh, humans are sure a handful,” mumbled Kelpie, putting aside his own action of encouraging the painter.



With the investigation report on a painter named O’neill in one hand, Edgar closed his eyelid tightly.

Early this morning, this investigation report was delivered by the detective who was hired by him.

According to this, a painter Patrick O’neill, who specialized in painting a noble’s manor house that was located in a scenic area did exist. The paintings he produced were naturally hanged in the manor house of those who hired him and so there was no way they were sold to the public. By due to the Season, there were many countryside resident nobles who were gathered in London that knew about him.

He had one son. The son’s name was indeed Paul, and his age matched. Only, after O’neill’s death, it was completely unknown about where and how he was. It was a common case when no one would know the location, or a sixteen, seventeen-year-old boy, who was left on his own stumbled into the great city was dead or alive.

O’neill death was caused by gas poisoning at his residence in Bath, Somerset where he was living at the time. It was declared an accident, but his son, who had survived from light poisoning, was apparently claiming that it was murder.

“Murder.....?”

At the least, after his father’s death, Paul lived as the son of Foreman, a different painter.

That hide-up was quite clever. It was hard to think that Paul had thought up this on his own, which makes it easy to believe that there was the work of some kind of organization behind the curtain.

Could that organization be the “Scarlett Moon”?

O’neill painted Edgar’s family house. His family, and Edgar himself.

His painting was destroyed along with the house in the fire, but perhaps, he might have retained one or two sketches or a practice piece of it somewhere. It would be troublesome for Prince if there was someone who saw Edgar and reminded of the Duke family. Or perhaps, while O'Neill was in the Duke family house, he might have found out something that got in the way of Prince, which lead to him being tracked down and killed.

And if it means that after that, the "Scarlett Moon" secretly hid Paul who happened to survive....

No longer could he say that Paul was still the same as he was in the past.

However, Edgar placed the report between his books as if to hide it. Because just then, Raven entered into his office.

"Raven, do you think I resemble Prince?" asked Edgar, as he watched his servant pour him tea.

"What are you saying, sir."

"Not about my looks. He tried to mold me into someone just like himself. The education I was forced through, the knowledge and doctrine and my choice of gestures and words, even how I thought and felt was corrected. I feel that how I am now is similar to Prince than how I was in the past... I know how to dominate and control people. I can become as ruthless as I need to. My heart doesn't ache. Before I knew it, I became self-righteous, shameless and unscrupulous, and I can tolerate it if everything doesn't go my way, and I want to tear apart anyone who messes with me. On top of that, I'm a philanderer."

"No, you are not him. That man was just lusted for women, and had no gift in philandering them," replied Raven with a serious face.

"So you could only correct about me on that part. Thanks."

As he was still mulling things over in his head, Raven opened his mouth to speak.

"You are nothing like him. If you were, why was there so many others who trusted you and came with you to fight?"

He felt honestly happy at those words, however, Edgar still thought they were alike.

From now on, as long as he lived, they would remain alike. If he was going to fight him as he had that man in his mind, then that means he would have to cut off his former self.

For example, like how he would have to erase Paul, who knew him from his peaceful, happy times with his very own hands.

“Lord Edgar, that’s why, I’m worried. You are very kind to those you feel you have made an understanding with even a little.”

Could he mean Paul. Even if he was a spy from that Robin Hood gang, he could be worried that Edgar might not be able to go through with his decision.

“Raven, you’ve grown.”

He came all this way with the intention of protecting this young man who was treated like a human-killing machine. However, in truth, Edgar felt that he was in fact saved by his presence all this time.

As long as he had someone to protect, he still might not become like Prince. Even if he was going to hurt those who he came to respect and understand....



“What is going on!” shouted Lydia as she finally blew her top.

As it were, when she woke up in the morning, Kelpie was taking up a spot in her room.

She complained that there was a female sleeping in the room! And kick him out, but after she dressed and prepared herself and came downstairs to have breakfast, he was still there.

Her father must have heard from Nico that this young man with a tall figure and big attitude was in fact a fairy as he sat across from him with a puzzled look on his face as he watched the fae throw uncooked eggs, still with their shell, one by one into his mouth.

Of course, Nico didn’t favor being with the barbaric kelpie, so he must have had no intention of having a meal with him at the table. Like he was rotating with Lydia, he snorted through his nose grumpingly as he left the room.

Ever since then, Kelpie was always in a proximity close enough that Lydia always had him in sight.

When she rode the carriage to the earl house, he was right next to her. At this

rate, till when Lydia would go home, he might intend to stay in her office room. It didn't seem like he had any particular business with her and was just standing or sitting there, so Lydia was finally starting to get annoyed.

"Don't be bothered."

Kelpie would only reply with that.

When they reached the earl house and the driver opened the door, Edgar stepped up into the carriage as he pushed Lydia back in as she was getting ready to step out.

"Good morning, Lydia."

She hadn't seen him since that incident and had been avoiding him for three days so she was taken aback at his appearance.

"G-good...., wait, more like, what do you want?"

Lydia was obviously leering away from him, but Edgar didn't seem bothered at all.

"Let's have a talk. Mr. Kain, this carriage is for two. Would you mind going somewhere."

"Why do I have to move."

"This carriage runs for my house. So does the driver and horse."

Hmph, snorted the kelpie through his nose.

"Fine, then. Since you're in a pitiful state."

What do you mean? She wanted to ask him, but Kelpie vanished in a blink.

But, that means, I'm left alone with Edgar in this cramped place?

As soon as she realized that, Lydia became frightened again.

"Wait a moment, I'm getting off!"

"Lydia, I pledge I won't lay a finger on you, so please stay here."

Perhaps because he said it like an earnest, urgent tone, or because it was better not to entice him if he wasn't going to let her off, for now, Lydia had no choice but to sit back down on the carriage seat.

He told the driver to circle around the area, then like he was finally relieved, he commented in a leisurely manner "what good weather it is today."

"It's completely cloudy."

"This is the best it gets in London."



“Well, yes.”

“Are you still upset about what happened?”

Lydia herself wasn't sure if she was upset or not. If she thought about it hard, it felt like something you shouldn't have gotten bothered with that much.

Just because she was kissed on her wrist, Edgar was sure to have taken the hands and kissed all the near-by daughters and lady's hands already.

It was like a form of greeting to noblewomen. He might have just fooled around and played a joke on Lydia by doing it to her.

It was usually done on the back of the hand, but there really wasn't that much of a difference.

Even if she thought that, at the time, the air felt lascivious and the how he acted, how he looked at her, everything was completely unfamiliar with Lydia, and she was scared so much she wanted to bolt out and run.

But that was because she didn't have any experience with other people, it especially came from her childish fear and nervousness because didn't know that much about men, so it might have not been Edgar's fault.

Even if she thought that, she didn't want to end up forgiving him and turning back into his puppet again.

“It doesn't matter if I'm angry or not. Besides, you just probably wanted to joke around.”

“What would make you forgive me?”

“If you just let time go back, maybe I'll just forget about it in some time?”

“How much is some time? It would be my last regret if I remained in an uneasy position to you.”

“Last regret?”

“My mistake. Concern.”

She thought, what a weird mistake, but she didn't let it bother her.

“I don't want you to forget, but forgive me. I don't want to forget. I may have caused you to have an unpleasant experience, but I haven't felt that close to you like I had at that time before.”

Edgar right now, didn't try to touch her like he promised, but Lydia again, had

the feeling like she was stroked over.

But, because he was like that, it was more difficult for her to forgive him.

Not only at that time, but it felt like she was going to allow him to get close to her from now on as well.

From confusion, Lydia was made to turn her head down, and looking at her like that, he must have given up trying to make her say she forgives him, and so he changed the subject.

“Were you courted by Paul?”

But, he chose an even more peculiar subject.

“He rescued you like a knight in armor; it would be natural that he must have said something to get your affections.”

That’s only natural for someone like you to do.

“You’re mistaken. Paul didn’t save my, he was saving you. He wanted you to remain as someone he respects.”

“Did he say that?”

“He did.”

“.....He surely is a natural fool. It was just the opportunity when you were being enamored by his valiant deed, and yet he goes and says something like splashing cold water on you.”

It may have been true that she felt a little disappointed, but it wasn’t that big of a deal.

“The reason you are scared of love, could be that naturally gentlemen would seem to show interest in you but then innocently reject the notion.”

“It’s kind enough that to be told that they have no interest in you before you build feelings for them. It’s much more preferable than someone like you who messes around with people’s feelings...”

Edgar looked like he made a faint frown, like he appeared hurt, which made Lydiashut her mouth. But, she still thought he was just acting the part.

“You’re right. Paul isn’t a man who would deceive others. But he may be hiding something. Something very important to me.”

He spoke in a serious tone, perhaps because it was related to something that might affect the friendship that Edgar felt towards him.

"I want to ask him. I want to talk and if we can, I want to come to an understanding. But, it may turn into a fight. Lydia, if the two of us start fist-punching fight, whose side would you be on?"

"Punching? However I think about it, I can only imagine the scene where you are the one who is one-sidedly punching the other."

"I see. In that case, it would make you want to side with Paul. But if you go with that reasoning, and if I lost, then would you switch to my side. Then, it wouldn't be so bad to be beaten to a pulp."

She didn't know what he meant in what he said.

But, she could feel that it wasn't going to be nice and pretty.

".....Hey, don't go to fight. He treasures the promise that he made with you in the past. He said it was thanks to you that he became a painter, and when he became famous, he wanted to have you see his paintings more than anyone else. Paul believes that the Duke's young son has died, but he put the image of the young son onto you. However much you try to pull a fight with him, I don't think he could bring himself to hit you."

He had his head held down slightly and a strand of his golden hair slipped down over his nose. From the beautifully sculptured side of his face, she wasn't able to imagine what he was feeling or thinking at all.

Did he really have the intention of fighting with Paul. But, for what reason.

He lifted his head once again and made the driver stop the carriage.

"Lydia, thank you for sharing your time with me."

"Are you going somewhere?"

"Just a little ways."

For some small reason, Lydia was thinking that she should say something or listened and clearly accepted what he had to say.

"Um, Edgar, whether I side with you or not, you won't lose. You're able to craftingly make luck turn to your side. Even with Paul, if you wish it, you'll be able to understand with each other."

He had stepped off of the carriage, but he turned around to smile at her.

"You're so kind. That's why I build expectations. That you really do have feelings for me."

During the time when Lydia didn't know how to response and her cheeks turned red, the door was shut and the carriage had started off again. The sight of Edgar who put on his top hat had instantly disappeared into the crowd of people.



Paul had returned to the boarding house on Fleet Street, and he breathed out a deep sigh as he held the medicine bin that was handed to him from one of the men in the organization that he had a seat in.

He didn't know about the scheme his organization had been planning for Edgar all this time and had the strong belief that he was the true Blue Knight Earl.

Edgar had taken a liking to Paul's paintings and possessed both the charming features of a peer-like noble spirit and a friendly down-to-earth characteristic.

Paul wanted to create a painting that the young earl would be satisfied with and by doing that, he had the feeling like he was fulfilling the promise he made with the Duke family's deceased young son.

But, if he, who called himself Edgar Ashenbert, was someone close to the leader of the organization who killed his father, then his duty was very important.

He didn't have any time to spare in being sentimental.

"Mr. Foreman, you have a visitor."

The one who spoke to him was the middle-aged housekeeper who managed and ran the boarding house he was staying in.

To the he one who came in through the door she opened for, Paul went frozen and nearly dropped the medicine bin in reaction.

"M-my lord....."

"What is the matter? You have the tragic look of someone who facing the end of the world."

"Oh, no, nothing is the matter. More than that, thank you for coming to such a foul and squalid place like this...."

"I have an interest in what a painter's studio was like."

He realized that remaining sitting down was rude and rushed to stand up.

"It's just a regular room. Although, it's covered with splotches of paint here and there."

Paul thought that he should offer him a seat, but everyone of them was covered with smeared oil and paint that it made him worry that it might dirty the earl's expensive fine frock coat.

He also must have had no intention of sitting down on a dirty chair, as he walked over to the window and stood looking out.

"Are you moving?"

"Eh."

The Earl's eyes stopped on the trunks that were piled up in the corner of the room. He couldn't possibly answer that he was preparing for his escape overseas.

"No, ah, I was asked by an acquaintance, if my room could be used to store them for a while."

It was a desperate and sad excuse, as there were other open trunks that were left out with clothes thrown into them.

"I see. The reason I came by today, was because I had something that I wanted to ask you."

He was looked at with a faint smile and sharp, piercing eyes, which made Paul go stiff once again. The medicine bin that was in his hand felt like it could slip out of his hand, wet from sweat.

"...What might that be."

"The moonstone ring, why are you lying that it still doesn't come off?"

His eyes whipped down to his right hand and saw that there indeed was no ring on his finger. He had switched it onto his left hand from time to time as he thought it got in the way of when he wanted to hold a painting brush. He had made sure and paid attention so that he wouldn't be noticed, but since this was his own room, he had completely forgotten about it.

"You were able to take it off from some time ago, weren't you. But if you said that it came off, then there would be no excuse for you to stay in my house. I thought you were keeping quiet because you didn't want to lose the chance to get friendly with Lydia. But even though you protected her from me, you let her return home without doing anything. That is strange. There would be no man who wouldn't miss such a golden opportunity. If he did, then he must be some

unsociable coward or has a different goal for keeping on wearing the ring.”

Putting aside how it would be normal to take that opportunity or not, it was just as Edgar said.

Since Paul was unsociable and on top of that had a different goal.

“Did you have a necessity to remain in the house for some more time?”

How much has he figured out?

“.....Because Lydia had purposed that it would be safer if I stay at the earl house, you offered me a painting job. The ring came off more quickly than I expected, and if I lost the reason to remain in your house, then I became worried that you might take back the painting offer.”

That part was true. Paul had the duty of reporting about Edgar to his comrades, but since he was under the belief that he was the real earl, he thought of his painting job above all else.

“I’m surprised to see you’re good at making up a quick excuse. I thought you were a man who couldn’t lie.”

“That wasn’t a lie.”

“Your name isn’t Foreman but O’neill. Are you saying that this isn’t a lie as well?”

Why. Paul was shocked and his mind flew into dismay. His comrade had said that even if Foreman was investigated, the name wouldn’t lead to O’neill.

‘Unless he knows of you from the past.’

The housekeeper knocked on the door. It seems she came to pour them tea. In reflex, Paul went to open the door, and said that he would do it and took away the tray.

“O’neill was also a painter. He was killed eight years ago. At least, you thought so, and because you thought so, so must have sensed your life was in danger at the time.”

Like he was driving him into a corner, Edgar continued on.

Paul’s mind was slowly strengthened and coldly made up.

This young beautiful man was also a part of the group that killed his father. He had to do it.

“What are you talking about? I always was Foreman. My father has retired but

still alive.”

He took care so that his voice didn't come out shaken, and carefully took off the lid of the medicine bin that he had in his hand all this time.

A white-colored grained powder that was inside dropped into the teacup. From the corner of his eye, he made sure that Edgar wasn't looking towards him.

If he had thought about it with a straight mind, there was no way that he would put his lips to a drink that was poured for him in the room of the man who held distrust towards him. However, Paul was worked up and couldn't think about such a detail.

“Where did this name of O’neill pop out from?”

He placed the teacup right by Edgar's side.

“I knew about him. He was a good painter. The manor house that was built next to the lake was the White Lily. It was always a question to me on what part of it was a white lily but I finally understood when I saw his painting. It was the elegant white lilies themselves that were blooming near the edge of the lake.”

It was like Paul could see the sight of that scene, the painting which his father had painted right in front of his eyes. It was the manor house of the Duke family of Silvainford.

It was a lake out of a dream, surrounded by the rich countryside and mystical forests. The noble people who lived there were all kind and beautiful....

He felt dizzy. Why would he, the henchman of Prince, know about such a thing. If he knew about Paul in the past....

No, that was impossible.

“Your painting has the same delicate sensitiveness as O’neill. You were indeed meant to become a painter.”

The impressive ash mauve eyes, the golden-blond hair that shined like it was brimming with sunshine, his perfectly straight nose and lips that wore a soft smile, could there be another human being who could be blessed with such looks that could mesmerize anyone in an instant?

Edgar picked up the teacup. He appeared unaware and innocent like a child. He made it seem like he didn't come to confront Paul's feelings of distrust towards him but came to talk and open up about something important and valuable.

And then, he had the feeling like he was being tested.

If Edgar had realized that Paul had investigated his surroundings and sneaked into the earl house to harm him, but if there was still the friendship that previously existed between them, could he have come to confirm that?

That's why he could be trying to drink the tea that he really should be cautious about.

Previous friendship?

That's right, if this person, was really him.

".....If I wasn't recommended onto this path by someone, then I don't know if I would have come this far."

"Because you wanted to be a poet?"

Oh, so he was. There was only one person he opened up to about his dream of making poems.

No longer was there anything to doubt, so Paul didn't think but slapped the teacup out of Edgar's hand.

The cup shattered and the tea spilled all over the floor.

The hot tea had surely splashed onto Paul's hand and as well as Edgar, but both of them weren't bothered by that.

When the housekeeper came rushing in, surprised at the sound of things breaking, they weren't bothered, even when she realized that the visitor was a noticeably a noble at one look and walked over to him with a worried look.

Paul remained standing and barely managed to place his hand on his chest.

"Paul, you really haven't changed."

".....Please forgive me, my lord. ....no,"

Just when he was about to say 'your grace' the housekeeper approached Edgar in an unnaturally close distance.

She held a knife in her hand. Edgar saw it and tried to swing away but the thin point sank into his waist.

In the same instance that she swiftly backed away, Edgar felt to the floor in a crouch.

There's poison on the knife. Paul realized that immediately, but the housekeeper grabbed his arm as he tried to rush over to him.



“Hurry and get out of here. Tell your comrades and have them clean up this body.”

He isn't a body yet. But.

“You're....one of the ‘Scarlett Moon’?”

“That's right, I'm a member of that group. It was perfect timing for this man to come here. Now why would you go and reveal that you had put poison into his drink like that. If you didn't kill him, he would have killed you.”

She was wrong. Edgar had no intention of killing Paul.

“Give me the antidote. This man isn't one of Prince's henchmen!”

“What are you saying of all things. Hey, are you planning on turning your tail on us?”

When she looked at him with distrustful eyes, the housekeeper turned around and was about to dash off. It seemed like she was going to go and quickly call others in the group.



Without thinking, Paul grabbed ahold of her shoulder.

To use the first simple stages of self-defense, or in another one's view, violence to a woman was a first for Paul and a shameless act in itself, but there was no other option.

After he knocked her unconscious, he searched her, but she didn't carry anything that looked like an antidote.

Should he call a doctor? But if he did that, it would put in question the existence of the organization. His father was a member. The 'Scarlett Moon' had protected Paul all this time and he made a pledge to become a member to fight those responsible for his father's death.

He didn't know what he should do, and slumped to the floor.



Before she realized it, the number of people in her work office, no the number of fairies had seemed to increased, which made Lydia feel like a headache was building up.

First of all, it was no mistake that Kelpie and his big, overbearingly tall figure was the reason that made this room feel so small and crowded.

To top of the annoying part, Nico was walking around the room without any apparent reason. And he was bothering with the fluffy fur on his chest to any excessive degree.

Finally, Marygold and Sweetpea were beating their wings and flying about the room and she saw that there was a busy crowd of all the hobgoblins who resided in this grand house.

All right, now this is strange, thought Lydia and stopped her writing.

"Nico, is there something the matter?"

"It's like my body feels tingling all over."

"It feels like the air is billowing," "The magic is surging around like wild currents," said Marygold and Sweetpea in a nervous tone.

"Isn't the merrow's sword in this house? That's what is howling," interrupted Kelpie.

"The sword? Why?"

"How would I know that?"

"So, why are all of you in this room?"

"Being near a fairy doctor is somewhat better than nothing."

I guess that's the way it is.

But I didn't know that the sword could howl. As she thought, Lydiathought it

might be best to notify the butler and stood up.

Just at that time, Raven came in.

“Miss Carlton, have you heard anything about where Lord Edgar had gone?”

He said it in an even leveled voice, but the tone sounded like he hadn't the calm that he usually had.

“I had a short talk with him in the carriage, but he got off alone and walked off somewhere. I don't know where he headed.”

The sight of Raven in a restless state may be related to the sword howling. He had something like a letter crumbled in his fist.

“.....And Foreman.....?”

After he mumbled that, he turned around like he was about to leave, and she felt it was unnatural for him not to put a mister to Paul's name.

“Mister Foreman has not come today.”

The one who said that was the butler, Tomkins.

“He said he was going to return to his residence. He claimed he needed to let the air through or the paint he had in stock was going to mold. Raven, what is the matter. Is there some sort of problem?”

“Well, now, so the man isn't coming today. Then it isn't necessary for me to keep watch and guard any longer.”

Lydia looked over to Kelpie who said that.

“What does that mean?”

“It would be trouble if you were involved.”

“Involved? In what?”

“It doesn't matter anymore. Oh, good, so he isn't here. Then, I don't need to be in this noisy house, so I'm leaving.”

“Wait, Kelpie, explain properly!”

Lydia stood in front of him and blocked his path.

“If you don't say, then I'll cut all ties with you!”

“Cut ties? Do you think that would keep me away.”

“If you want to hang around, then do so, but I'll never open my mouth to speak to you ever again. However much you speak to me or hang around, I'll never respond.”

He fell silent like he was thinking that over. Then he finally combed his bangs up like he was frustrated.

"I just happened to hear something. When that painter was told to kill the earl by one of his comrades."

"WH-WHAT! Why does Paul have to kill Edgar?"

"Because he is an imposter."

"There was a possibility that Foreman was a member of an organization that the dance instructor was also membered in who attacked me. We fell suspicious and investigated, and it was indeed..." whispered Raven in a regretful tone.

"Mister Tomkins, I will go to the boarding house where Foreman is staying."

Raven hurried out of the room in a dash. The butler must have decided he couldn't just stand around and also left the room.

"Kelpie, why did you not say anything! You knew that Edgar's life might be in danger..."

"It has nothing to do with me. And besides, with that man out of the picture, you'll be able to return to Scotland. And yet, that painter, he looked so pathetic like he was too scared to commit murder, that's why I placed a spell on him so that he would have the confidence to do it."

Hearing that, Lydia lost her temper.

"I'm cutting off from you! Hurry up and leave!"

"Hey, Lydia,"

Like she didn't want to hear any excuses, Lydia ran out of the room.

Just then, she heard a commotion coming from the entrance hallway.

She heard the shouting voice of Raven calling Edgar's name. The sound of the worried and panicked voices and sound of the servants moving about by Tomkin's orders could be heard.

Lydia came to the bottom of the steps of the stairways and saw Edgar, who was carried by Tomkins with his eyes completely shut and froze in her tracks as she felt the strength in her legs nearly fall out.

The driver of a horse-drawn carriage said that he was asked by a young man to drive the man to the Ashenbert Earl estate in Mayfair because he was in a

seriously dangerous state.

The young man's profile matched that of Paul's.

It was a mystery why Paul, who had supposedly tried to kill Edgar, would end up sending him to his home.

The doctor remained in Edgar's room for a long period of time. However, when that doctor left when it turned to dusk, the inside of the house turned eerily still and quiet.

It appeared like the merrow's sword was still howling as if moaning over the danger that befell over its master, but humans couldn't hear it.

Around that time, Lydia finally was able to hear Edgar's condition from Raven, but was only told that he remained unconscious.

"Symptoms of paralysis appear, so I believe they used some sort of nerve poison."

"Nerve....?"

"It's similar to the venom of a snake."

He wasn't a doctor, yet he knew so much, probably because the knowledge about poison was part of the training he went through while he was growing up as an assassin monster.

"There isn't an antidote?"

"There is not. It may well be a combination of several sorts."

Lydia gulped down the words oh, no.

Raven appeared like his usual self, calm and composed, but he was the closest thing to a family Edgar had, so he must be the one in the most pain.

Lydia and Tomkins, all the ones working in the earl house have only known Edgar for just three short months.

That's why, even if she wanted to cheer Raven up, no words came to mind.

More than that, Lydia herself was filled with feelings of disbelief.

"I had a bad feeling," he murmured.

"Even when Lord Edgar clearly knew that Foreman was a spy from the 'Scarlett Moon,' he didn't allow me to cause any harm to him."

"Scarlett Moon?"

"It is the name of an organization that is fighting against Prince. It seems like

they are only doing charitable work, but they claimed that Lord Edgar was the henchman of Prince and an imposter posing as the Blue Knight Earl, and threatened him that they will go after his life unless he handed over the sword.” Lydia knew nothing of this.

It couldn't be helped since there was no necessity in revealing that to Lydia if it had nothing to do with fairies. She was only hired as a fairy doctor, and was not a part of their fellowship.

But she still felt left out of the circle.

Because, she considered herself a little bit closer than just someone hired.

Even if she thought that what Edgar was saying was filled with lies, there was a part of her that was happy when he displayed signs of friendliness.

Not only was he asking for her work as a fairy doctor, but because she wasn't an honest member of their group, she remained out of their battle, and felt that she was able to support the part of him that was lonely.

More than anything else, she wanted him to have told her.

Because there could have been something Lydia could have done.

At that time in the carriage, she wouldn't have said things that sounded more siding with Paul and might have been able to think about Edgar's feelings.

“Since he didn't let me know, Lord Edgar must have sensed that things would turn out like this when he went to see Foreman.”

“Are you saying that he was going to abandon you? There is absolutely no way he would think that.”

“Foreman is the only person who knows about Lord Edgar from the past.”

That could have been why he wasn't able to bring himself to harm him. If Paul was gone, Edgar might have felt that he would come to forget who and what kind of person he was.

He was grieving over how he has changed.

That's why he could have been clinging on to Paul who knew him from before he changed.

“Raven, ....It's my fault too. I had said to Edgar that if he wished, he would be able to come to an understanding with Paul. If I think about it now, Edgar could have been confused to as if he should see him as his enemy and cut him loose

or not.... Because, he didn't seem himself. If I didn't say anything out of my position, then he might have not let down his guard when he went to see him...."

Lydia covered her face with her hands.

"This isn't your fault. Lord Edgar always makes his decisions by himself."

Yes, he was right, Edgar said that he wanted to reconcile with Lydia and said that it was a 'last regret.' He must have already made his decision.

But, could there be a person who doesn't get confused in their decision. Even as they made their resolve, hearts are made to linger.

Lydia's overly-peaceful way of thinking would soften the hard tension of Edgar who continues to battle. He might turn his attention to Lydia to seek that, but she could have numbed his sense of smell that sensed any kind of danger.

"Miss Carlton, would you like to see Lord Edgar?"

".....Wouldn't I interfere his rest?"

"I believe he would want to see you."

It was as if he was offering a chance for Lydia to say her last goodbyes to him.

She was lead into the room and walked over to his pillow side and the housekeeper who was watching over him was polite and left the room.

The color of Edgar's face was pale and white, and his breathing was barely noticeable unless you got up right up to him.

Lydia softly took his hand into hers. They were so cold and when she remembered how they weren't usually this way, she wanted to cry.

At the least she wanted to warm them up and blanketed them with her palms.

She didn't want to never be able to talk with him again. She hadn't reconciled their friendship back together yet.

Since Lydia didn't say she forgave him.

It wasn't like she was all that mad at him. Since Edgar unusually looked like he was sorry for his actions, she was only being bold and thought it would be good if he in good behavior for a little longer.

Since she was always tossed around by him, she thought this was fair enough.

She didn't know how serious he was and why he would think it his 'last regret' for this stupid misunderstanding to continue between him and Lydia, but if

things continued at this rate, then this would end as an unbearable regret for Lydia.

And Kelpie. If he didn't but his head into things then Paul would have thought things over and stopped from trying to kill Edgar.

That part also made Lydia feel responsible as a fairy doctor.

"Pull yourself together. You aren't a person who would go down easy like this."

If it was usual, he would be opening his mouth to say to half-jokingly to flirt with her.

I have to do something.

Overflowed with a strong emotion, Lydia stood up.

She had been thinking over of a way to save him. There was one way that might be possible.

Unexpectedly, she didn't have any hesitation. Once she decided that that was the only way, she rushed to leave the room.



## Chapter 6 - The Blue Knight Earl's Blood

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Lydia left the earl house by herself and was running in a dash down along the street.

When she finally reached Hyde Park, she headed to the lake that was located in the center of the grounds.

It was the season when the sun went down slowly, so it wasn't completely dark, with the sky still slightly lit, she was able to spot couples who were enjoying a walk in the park.

Trying to dodge people's eyes seeing her, Lydia went over to a patch of bushes and yelled out over the lake.

"Kelpie, I knew you're there. There is something I want to ask of you."

The water surface remained still.

Oh, no, what'll I do....

"Kelpie, are you really not here? Did you go back to Scotland?"

It was her fault for yelling at him regarding Edgar.

"I came all this way for you, I'm not going back so easily."

When she turned around, he stood up against a tree in his human form.

"Weren't you not going to speak to me again?"

It wasn't the time for that; it was a selfish thing for her to say, but Lydia had nothing else she could do.

A kelpie in the water was the most dangerous thing. She had let him be by her side when he was on land with her as a water horse had hardly any strong magic on the lands, but Lydia had been taking particular caution in not getting anywhere near water when she was with Kelpie.

But right now, she took the opportunity of them being close.

She walked up close enough that he would hardly need to use any strength to pull her into the water if he were to change his mind and she looked up to his beautiful magic eyes.

"I want you to save Edgar. Please."

“So which means, he hasn’t gone to hell yet.”

“ .....

“You know, for me, I think it would be great if he got out of the picture. Hadn’t you just lost your temper regarding that just earlier. And yet I can’t understand, why would you come and ask for something like that?”

“I’m the only one who knows a water horse.”

Probably because she watered her eyes like she was about to cry, Kelpie let out a heavy sigh and finally opened his mouth like he gave up.

“Are you saying a water horse could save him?”

“A poison was used on him. Kelpie, you have the power to purify water. You know of a way to get rid of the poison that’s in his body, don’t you?”

“There isn’t anything good of telling that to a human. Because some time ago, there were humans who hunted down water horses in order to get their hands on the perfect antidote.”

Like she thought, there was something that could be done. Lydia stepped over to Kelpie even closer.

“Please tell me, I won’t tell a soul.”

“You’re a fairy doctor. That part of you I can trust. Only I won’t tell it for free.”

Of course, she knew that.

And she could predict what sort of condition this kelpie would bring up.

Lydia nodded silently.

“You said that you would cut your ties with me.... You haven’t forgiven me for instigating the painter, haven’t you. And yet, you’re saying that you’re able to do as I say?”

Even if he didn’t trade with her, he had the power to whisk her away, and yet he would go and think of her feelings like that, what a strange, kelpie.

“It feels unpleasant for you if I didn’t speak to you. So you wouldn’t do something that would frighten me or make me suffer, would you?”

“I have no such intention. I just want to see what it’s like to marry you.”

To see what it’s like to marry; the sight of this kelpie who had a vague expectation that marriage was a good thing, appeared cute to her eyes.

She was originally someone who had spent more time with fairies than with

humans. In the human realm, there weren't that many things she could do as a fairy doctor, and if she was going to eventually end up withdrawing into the fairy world, then this means she was just going to do it faster than she had expected.

"Marriage...., was still a promise that we made when I said I'll do it when you would 'give me the moon.' So for now, I will be able to live with you in the fairy realm.... Could that be enough?"

"That isn't bad."

However, Kelpie still looked down at her like he wasn't satisfied yet.

"You won't be able to see him who you want to save so much."

He was a water horse and yet he's such a sympathetic fairy.

"I want to reconcile with him. It's fine as long as he's saved and I can tell him that I'm not angry at him anymore. ....I don't know what Edgar thinks, but for someone like me who only had fairies for friends, unusually, he was a person who I felt I could become friends with."

Finally, Kelpie said 'All right.'

Right in front of Lydia, he sank his teeth into his own finger, making red blood trickle out from the open wound.

Lydia gazed at it as she was amazed to learn that kelpie's blood is red as well, but that was perhaps it was the only color she could associate with blood.

With his other hand, he gently held Lydia's chin.

Lydia closed her mouth like she was waiting for a kiss.

What touched her lips was the tip of Kelpie's finger. His smooth blood was cold as it ran down her throat, and tasted like the fresh water that soaked out from the rocks of the newly melted ice.

It was pure, untainted water that just woke from its slumber.

"Now, hurry up and go."

Kelpie's hand was moved away and Lydia looked up to him.

"What am I suppose to do with this blood?"

"Have him drink it."

".....Wh-what are you saying? That I have to give it to him mouth-to-mouth? I couldn't never do such a thing..., ahh! goodness, you should have just made

Edgar drink if from yourself directly.”

“I don’t want to stick my finger in that bastard’s mouth.”

So, it doesn’t matter what happens to me?

Even if the woman who you’re taking as your bride is going to kiss another man.....?

Regarding that aspect, kelpies must have a different sense of perception than humans.

“Well, then, I guess anywhere is fine? But make sure and lick nearest the flow of blood on him. A kelpie’s blood loses its power if it comes in contact with air. There’s no other way but to make you the carrier and transfer it to him.”

She didn’t know what to do when she was told anywhere was fine, but this wasn’t the moment to be mulling that over any longer.

Lydia nodded and dashed out of the park.

In the silent earl house entrance hall, Nico stood standing, waiting for her.

It seemed he knew where Lydia went off to, as he stood twitching his whiskers in an irritating and furious manner.

“You smell of kelpie,” he grumbled as he stood in front of Lydia.

“Don’t do it, Lydia. It’s stupid to trade with a kelpie.”

“That kelpie is safe. He said he wouldn’t do anything to harm me.”

“That isn’t the problem. First of all, even if that human Edgar died, that wouldn’t cause us any trouble. We’ll go home to Scotland and just live the life that we had been living.”

“If there’s a way to save him and I didn’t do it, then I’ll live a life of regret.”

“He’s the filthiest of humans out of the dump. The reason he puts on a good face in front of you is because he thinks you have value that he could use. Are you going to give up your dream of being a fairy doctor for the sake of a man like that? You’re too soft-hearted.”

“He may have a filthy dump like part of him, but I also know the part of him that isn’t like that. That’s why.... Nico, do you think I would be able to become a useful fairy doctor for people if I didn’t do anything now?”

Lydia lowered her body down to kneel in front of Nico and held out her hand.

He was a noble gentleman so he didn’t allow Lydia to pick him up or stroke him

that easily.

He was a friend that stood side-to-side to her from her childhood.

“Nico, thank you, for all this time. For being by my side.”

She took Nico’s hand as he remained grumpy and silent. His hand was soft and fluffy, like that of a cat’s paw, she squeezed that hand that was able to pick up a teacup much more gracefully than a human and amazingly crafty enough to use a knife and fork and let it go.

“What are you going to do about the professor?”

“I’ll write a letter to him later. Nico, after I’m gone, if you could, please try to share some drinks with him for a while.”

Nico still put on a grumpy face and didn’t reply to her.

Lydia stood up and quickly headed to Edgar’s room.

Marygold and Sweetpea sat atop of a vase that sat on the decorative stand in the hallway and looked over to her with nervous, frightened eyes.

Lydia didn’t spare any time to talk to them and whisked by the front of them.

She told Raven, who opened the door to his room for her, to let her have some time with him alone one more time as she dashed in the room.

He only nodded to her and let her have her way.

Lydia immediately went over and knelt by the bed side. She breathed in and out, to try to calm herself down.

Ohhh, now what do I do.

She was told anywhere was fine, but to touch a man with her lips by herself was not what Lydia ever imagined she would do in her life.

That alone made her nervous. At least the good thing was he was unconscious. Somewhere close to the flow of blood?

The heart? That was impossible. She would have to undress him.

It was embarrassing that she had even thought about it, which made Lydiawant to run out of the room. She could hear the beat of her heart as she remembered the reassuring thought that blood runs all over a person’s body.

I know! his hand...

Lydia, nervously, took his hand into hers.

And pressed her lips against his wrist, where she felt the beating of his heart.

Lydia spent some time waiting as she was unsure if Kelpie's blood had any affect on Edgar's body.



Just when she was starting to get worried if the amount of blood wasn't enough or if she shouldn't have stopped herself and made him drink it mouth-to-mouth, his body twitched.

Slowly, his eyes opened. His ash mauve eyes looked around the air around him and finally settled at Lydia.

"Edgar....."

She was so relieved that she forgot that she was holding onto this hand tightly.

"Lydia, why are you here....."

He must have had no idea what was going on and not able to grasp the situation as he twisted his brows together like he was trying to come up with an answer.

"It's all right now. You're better."

"I was having a dream about you."

Lydia grew panicked at the thought that he might have been watching her even though he was supposed to be asleep.

“I had grown old and in my death bed. There were people gathered around me and I was searching for you. But I couldn’t find you and I was shocked. Why? At that time, I was thinking that there was no way you wouldn’t be there and I was convinced that I had spent so many decades with you.”

As Lydia listened to his story, she finally realized that she was holding his hand. It would be awkward if she suddenly let it go. And besides, he was sure not aware about how his hand was and not paying any attention to it. She decided to softly let it go while he didn’t notice and slowly relaxed her grip.

However, Lydia’s hand was suddenly gripped tightly back by Edgar.

Opposite of the slow, weak words that were spilling out of him, his grip was so strong it didn’t let her go.

“And, then, I desperately tried to remember when and where I had lost you. ....Then I finally remembered. I forced my advances onto you and made you come to hate me.”

“I don’t hate you. You just always play those jokes on me, so I was just pretending like I was angry at you. ....I just wanted to say that I’m not angry at you anymore.”

After she gave up trying to pull away her hand, he must have felt relieved and relaxed his grip. Oh, well, thought Lydia, and let her hand remain there.

“I wonder if that was what you said to me in my dream. Just when I was discouraged that I couldn’t see you again, you appeared in front of me. Just in the form like you are now. And you had said something to me but I couldn’t hear.....”

In his softly clenched hand, warmth was starting to come back. Gradually, Kelpie’s blood looked like it was purifying the poison in his body.

“And yet, I was just simply relieved. Just having you by my side, put’s me in a peaceful, happy feeling. At that time too, when I was about to meet my death as a lowlife, filthy human being, you held my hand and kissed it like you were forgiving me.”

She was glad she chose the wrist.

“.....It's just a dream.”

Edgar narrowed his eyes and smiled. It was the first time Lydia ever saw such an

innocently pure smile, not with anything hiding behind it or covering up what he was really thinking, and it naturally overlapped with the happy little boy from his peaceful past that Paul had talked about.

“Lydia, I wouldn’t be troubled.”

“Eh?”

“Even if you become serious about me and if you become completely absorbed about me and followed me like a shadow, I wouldn’t be troubled. ...You said you didn’t want to mistake the distance between us, but even if you become totally mistaken and came so near that I could reach you, so close that you’re practically falling into my arms, ....I wouldn’t be troubled at all.”

For an oddball girl like Lydia to fall in love with someone, anybody would be troubled. That’s what she thought all her life.

Edgar was just enjoying the game of running after Lydia who all the more so refused him, that’s why she thought he would be troubled if she were to turn serious about him.

And yet, he says he wouldn’t be troubled.

“So, would you try and fall in love with me.”

Lydia felt like the deep core of her heart was softly stroked and that surprised and confused her.

But, she held down her trembling emotions somehow.

Goodness, as soon as he starts feeling well, he’s back to himself.

It was like it was his born instinct to flirt with women. It would be stupid to seriously take in what he said every time.

But perhaps the reason why she repeated that to herself was if her feelings did turn serious, then she would know that it would be useless.

“....I’ll think about it.”

“The first thing you say isn’t ‘no’. Unusual; a positive response.”

“You were just recovered from a dangerous state.”

“Are you going easy on me because I’m recovering?”

“Get some sleep. ....See you tomorrow.”

He nodded back to her earnestly, and closed his eyes like he was relieved.

Her heart tinged with pain just a little at the thought that maybe she was



deceiving Edgar.

However, Lydia didn't think that she was that important to Edgar. If it was him, then after Lydia was gone, he would be able to turn his feelings and get back on track.

He was a person who could cut through more dangerous situations.

Good night. After she whispered that to him, Lydia stood up.



Feeling the morning sunshine, Edgar woke up, feeling like it was just like any other morning.

Unless he didn't realize the wound on his waist, he was sure to be vague about yesterday's occurrence, if it was real or not.

Putting on his gown, he left his bed chamber and entered his dressing room to sit down on the sofa and saw that his shoes that were shining after they were brushed and placed where they always were.

Because he was going through such an ordinary morning scene, he was beginning to wonder if he was really alive or not.

How did I get through that alive.

He expected that the one he was going to face was Paul alone. If it was him, he thought that Paul was someone who he could come to an understanding that they were not to fight each other after he had a talk with him, and he took that bet.

Paul changed his stance and opened up to him and talk. Even if it meant that he was revealing that there was poison in the tea, the moment he hit the cup out of Edgar's hand, he must have chosen to believe Edgar in front of him than what he was told by the members of the organization.

For Edgar, he was targeted at the moment when he put his guard down after the long moment of tension.

It looked like Paul didn't know that the housekeeper was a member of the 'Scarlett Moon' organization himself.

Right after he was stabbed, pins-and-needles felt like they ran over his skin. He realized that he was poisoned and tried to pull out the knife, but his body didn't respond to his will.

He had watched so many other people's deaths and through his intuition, he figured out that what just happened to him was going to lead to his death.

And yet, right now, it was like all the poison was drained out of his body.

"My lord, are you all right to be walking about now?"

His butler appeared.

"Ahh, good morning, Tomkins."

"Will you prefer the doctor examine you just to be safe?"

"No, I feel wonderful. There is nothing wrong. Could you pour me some hot tea."

"Right away."

His calm demeanor was like he knew that Edgar was going to recover.

"Tomkins, what is the name of the doctor who saved me? It isn't that bald-headed doctor, was it?"

"It was the fairy doctor."

He was right, it wasn't a dream.

He gently touched his wrist and recalled what happened with Lydia. She was his fairy used to mystical powers and brings him good luck.

It was definite, she was irreplaceable.

"Good morning, Lord Edgar."

Not seconds after the butler exited, Raven came in with the tea.

Like nothing happened, he greeted him with the usual morning greeting, which was a little disappointing response and made Edgar smile sourly.

"Raven, I think I may have put you through quite some worry."

No, he softly whispered and silently placed a cup on the table.

"I kept quiet to you because me myself was still undecided."

"I know, my lord. If I was at that scene, I would have killed Mister Foreman. Even if he, who had you carried here, had no malicious intent, I would have killed him along with the woman who aimed her knife at you."

Edgar still had his conscious up till Paul had pulled him up and put him onto the horse-drawn carriage. But he didn't know what happened after that. He hadn't said a word about what happened at Paul's boarding house room to Raven.

"Woman you say, how would you know?"

Raven unraveled something wrapped in cloth and set it onto the table. What was wrapped inside was the knife that tormented Edgar. Blood, and it was stained with the toxic chemical that had changed color.

It was a thin, folding knife, the kind that maids carry around with them as they worked.

“Mister Foreman had sneaked this into your clothing as well. He must have thought we could use it to determine which toxins were used.”

“Did you determine it?”

“No, I knew it was useless at first glance.”

For a second, Raven made a painful face, which could make one imagine how much despair he must have gone through at that time.

Just because he didn’t say any outspoken remarks, there was a part of Edgar who was being too dependent and taking advantage on his loyalty.

When he grabbed his arm, he looked back at him with slight surprise.

“I’m sorry. I wanted to take care of my business with Paul by myself. But that, was just like what you were worried about, it lead to me delaying my decision.”

Raven, in an unusually flustered gesture, knelt down in a somewhat fumbling manner.

“Lord Edgar, please do not apologize to me who is your lower. I am always prepared to accept whatever decision you chose. You don’t always think of your own safety as your first priority, but because of that, you are not Prince, but my master.”

The master that the blood-thirsty spirit in Raven obeys to.

Prince got his hands on Raven in order to become that, but the sprit didn’t accept him as its master, and only released its massacring, bloody nature, and Raven’s heart had locked up his emotions and he appeared like a lifeless doll and didn’t laugh or cry.

In his home country, children of the spirit who were the fighters of kings, in other words, children like Raven must have periodically been born.

Their ingenious religious belief and traditional culture which bounded the blood that possessed the strength to fight in wars.

It was unsure if the existence of those spirits gave birth to those legends or if

legends created those spirits. However, in that perhaps, there must be something that surpasses that of human knowledge.

Edgar was beginning to feel that the fairies that Lydia could see, must also been something of that.

And it is at those times, where he comes to have a thought.

What was the goal of that secretive, devilish organization of Prince that was doing experiments with magic?

It didn't seem realistic at all, but it seemed like Prince seriously was lusting after some sort of magical power that was able to change the impossible to possible.

Which means, the 'Scarlett Moon' that is fighting against Prince goes by the name of the guardian fairy from the legend of Lord Blue Knight might be because they are after some sort of magical power to use to fight with.

Are they wishing for the real Blue Knight Earl?

If that were so, what method should he use?

"Raven, will you lend me your strength again?"

"Yes, your wish is my command."

Just when Edgar was trying to think of something, the butler entered the room once again.

He said that Professor Carlton was asking to see him.

In a normal aspect, if he were to think about it, it was a visit without any promise and he came at such a senseless time of the day, but Edgar didn't mind at all since surprisingly he felt he had a particularly close relationship to Lydia's father.

He asked Raven to make his preparations and put his lips to the thick milk tea.

At that time still, he didn't think hard and clear about the reason why Carlton would pay him a visit so early in the morning.

"Quit? Lydia is quitting?"

"Yes. I'm very sorry for saying of such a sudden request, but Lydia will not be coming here any longer. I've come to ask if you would dismiss her from her position."

Carlton spoke in a businesslike manner, but he appeared obviously in low spirits.

“For what reason? This is all just too sudden.”

“.....I too, am not aware of the reason.... The only thing which is clear is that Lydia has chosen the other side.”

The other side? Edgar tilted his head in confusion to which Carlton curled his lips sadly.

“My lord, the other day, I had talked with you about how I would accept the day when Lydiawould make her natural decision. It seems that that time was unexpectedly yesterday.”

“I don’t understand.”

He offered the man a seat but Carlton didn’t bother to sit down, so Edgar drew near to him.

“Lydia, and her mother as well, had a difficult time adjusting to the human world, that’s why they were not that attached to their life here. The world of fairies and the world of humans, for those who can go back and forth through both of them, in a way, are able to do that because they have no root to bind them here. But if they do not have an attachment to the human realm or have some sort of desire, then it is difficult to live a life here. You may already know, but there are winners and losers on this side. For a carefree girl like Lydia who doesn’t know to suspect others, the life on the other side, I don’t know how kind the unchanging, boring life may be for her.....”

“You are saying she chose to live in the world of the fairies? Because she grew displeased and tired of this side?”

Edgar who was on the verge of death. He wondered if she was hurt when she found out about the plot that Paul was carrying who she was growing friendly with.

Did she give up hope on the human world that was filled with fights and wars?

“But, Professor Carlton, weren’t you able to tie your wife over onto this side? Then you should have been able to keep Lydia bound to the human world.”

“The one who can do that is not me. And my lord, neither was it you. It was not humans, but fairies, that spurred Lydia’s decision.”

The fairy who wanted Lydia, could it be the work of that black horse?

“Getting her back...., can we not even see her and talk to her?”

“There is nothing we can do. Just, only accept,” said Carlton flatly and quickly left.

He, himself, was probably unable to accept it, and from his unnerved feelings, he must have feared he might spill out his emotions in front of other people and decided to leave before that happened.

Edgar crumbled down into a chair and sank his fingers into his golden blond hair.

So it was difficult for even the love of family to bind Lydia to the human world. Just like it was with her mother, unless she found someone in the human world that she shared a bond stronger than that of blood, then nothing could hold her back.

The words ‘it wasn’t you’ that Carlton said to him, pierced Edgar’s heart.

But, he couldn’t let it go. If Lydia had despaired over the human world, then why would she go and rescue Edgar.

And she even went through the trouble of reconciling their relationship that was being put in the background. She said to him that she wanted to tell him that she wasn’t angry with him anymore.

As he silently thought, he whipped his eyes up to follow something. Because he thought he saw Nico’s long, gray tail pass by the windowsill.

“Nico!”

He dashed over to open the window. The cat who was apparently jumping from one balcony railing to another turned around to face him.

“Tell me, Nico. You know of the real reason that Lydia has gone, don’t you?”

“I don’t have any business here anymore, but I wanted to have a last drink of Mister Tomkins tea.”

“I’ll have him pour some immediately. Come over here. There’s chocolate.”

“Is it the round chocolate?”

“Yes, the ones with liquor in them.”

With each glum step, he came into the room.

On his two back legs, he walked over to the chair near the table and sat down on it.

No longer did Edgar disbelieve that Nico was an existence from the other side.

With the help of hot milk tea and chocolate, he managed to pull out the story from Nico. It surprised Edgar and filled him with unbearable, crushing pain.

“So Lydia agreed to the marriage with Kelpie in order to save me?”

“I think it wasn’t like she was saving you, more like it was her responsibility as a fairy doctor and Lydia’s personality that made her do it.”

“I can’t believe she went into the hands of that barbaric fairy as she thought of me.”

“Didn't I say it's not like that.”

“But normally, someone wouldn’t go so far for a man they didn’t have any feelings for?”

“Lydia isn’t the normal kind. And surprisingly, I guess she had a liking towards that kelpie. It may have not been like she went out of her will?”

You have to be joking, thought Edgar.

Just like Nico said, Lydia may be more soft-hearted than the average person. The reason she went and traded with Kelpie in order to save Edgar could just be because it was her personality.

If she thought that she could live more peacefully by Kelpie’s side more than being by Edgar, then it could have just been a deed of helping someone while she was at it for her.

But, you have to be joking.

In the end, Edgar wasn’t nearly killed by Paul. Even if Kelpie encouraged Paul and urged a human to poison another, there was nothing in that where Lydia had to feel responsible for.

And he wondered if he could bear having Lydia taken away from him by a horse.

“Nico, even you don’t want to have Lydia go away, don’t you? And that water horse isn’t a gentleman like us.”

Called a gentleman, Nico combed his whiskers like he wasn’t denying what he said.

Edgar was thinking of dragging Nico onto his side. For one thing, Kelpie is a fairy. He would need the help of a fairy on his side as well.

“Please tell me, isn’t there a way to bring back Lydia?”

“Hey, earl, Lydia made the decision on her own and went. What right do you or I

have in saying you want to bring her back?”

“I think she was reluctantly made to do it. If it was Lydia’s soft-hearted character that made her decide, then I’m going to go through with my character.”

“Your flirtatious character?”

“That’s right. I can’t bear to give up when I haven’t won her over.”

How would I know, mentioned Nico by shrugging his shoulders. Edgar didn’t lost by drawing himself near.

“Aren’t you able to go back and forth between the fairy realm and this side? If you don’t want to do anything, that’s fine, just show me the way.”

“I can’t take any other human besides Lydia through to the fairy world. Fairies have their boundaries and rules we have to abide to.”

“How about for a top hat and boots?”

Mnn, thought Nico as he crossed his arms. However, like he was batting away the temptation, he shook his head.

“I can’t do what I can’t do. If it was some other way, then well maybe, I can lend a hand if it didn’t involve forcing anything on Lydia.”

Edgar tried to think of something.

“And besides, even if you were able to find Lydia in the fairy world, are you saying that there is a way to break the promise that she made with Kelpie.”

That was another problem. However, if he found Lydia, wouldn’t something work out? He was thinking about it too positively. This kind of thing depended on vigor. If one thought about it too much, then that would make it seem like there was no path.

Just then, he thought of something and stood up.

“Those two, Marygold and Sweetpea, are they still here?”

Nico turned his head towards the window.

“Hey, the earl is calling for you.”

He turned and watched the window, thinking they would appear from there, but suddenly, there was a voice that spoke up from his feet.

“What business do you have with us?”

In the form of a young girl, the two field fairies were kneeling down before him.



“I’d like for you to take me to your Queen.”

“What, hey you, what are you saying, are you planning on accepting the marriage with a fairy?”

Before anything else, there was nothing he could do unless he entered the fairy world. In order to do that, he was using the preposterous idea of pretending to accept the marriage with the queen just for that, which made Nico jump up onto his shoulder with an irritated look.

And then he whispered into Edgar’s ear.

“However good a con-artist you may be, the method you would use with humans doesn’t work on fairies. Instead of bringing back Lydia, you’ll end up captured by the fairy queen.”

“Excuse me, Mister Nico, please do not interfere with our business. My lord has finally just brought himself to marry Our Highness.”

Marygold grabbed Nico’s tail and tried to pull him down.

“Hey, this human has no intention of.....”

Edgar grabbed Nico who tried to reveal the truth and covered his mouth.

“So, ladies, will you be able to depart immediately?”

“Ahh, but my lord, we will need the moon ring. The previous Blue Knight Earl had said that the promise of engagement can only be fulfilled when we exchange the ‘moon.’ That is why we will need for you to wear the ‘moon’ that Her Highness has given to you as proof of your promise.

Still carrying Nico, Edgar thought hard.

Exchange the moon with the promise. That would mean, that images the marriage between the Blue Knight Earl and his Lady, Gwendolen? The marriage of the lord of the earl house might have had some sort of tradition as proof of the promise with the moonstone.

At any rate, Paul had the problematic ring.

He must be under the watch of the ‘Scarlett Moon.’

What perfect timing. Then I’ll make the first move, thought Edgar as he lifted up the edge of his lips.

“All right. Let’s get back that ring. Ladies, Nico, I assume you’ll lend me a hand.”

“Of course, my lord.”

“More like, what are you plotting to do!”

Getting back Lydia, he whispered into Nico’s ear, and called for Raven.

“Prepare to leave. Oh, and bring me my sword.”



The club house that finally was able to spit out its last customer who kept up residence all through the night had its doors tightly closed until the hustle and bustle of the night arrived.

Along with Raven, Edgar stood in front of its doors.

“Lord Edgar, is this the headquarters of the ‘Scarlett Moon’?”

“Highly likely. But I don’t think I’m mistaken.”

It was the club that held that exhibition where Edgar and Paul first met.

The club owner, was a man named Slade who sold paintings. This place’s main members are the wealthy who are interested in paintings and the painters who want to sell their talent to them.

Because Paul’s father O’neill, and his other father Foreman, were both painters who accepts job offers from nobles, there was a high possibility that they were members of here. To begin with, it was the work of the owner of this place who introduced Paul to Edgar and made it work out so that the young painter would win his interest.

Even from that connection, he had thought that the ‘Scarlett Moon’ would be lurking behind the scenes of this club.

“Now, time for checkmate.”

Holding his long sword, hidden in his cane, Edgar knocked the door of the clubhouse.

After a moment, the one to pop out his head was a man who looked to be a servant.

“We haven’t opened yet, so please come back around dusk, Sir.”

“I have business with Mister Slade.”

“Uh, yes, what kind of business?”

“I was nearly killed by his woman. Tell him that I won’t mind talking to him before I make it public.”

The servant stared at Edgar with a puzzled look. He must have thought it was

some sort of secret passage word.

“Pardon me, but you are?”

“Earl Ashenbert.”

As soon as he said the name, the man widened his eyes. He didn't hide his trembling, and escaped back behind the door.

It's like he witnessed a ghost, thought Edgar who felt offended and took the liberty of entering.

He went up the stairs that connected from the entrance hall. Raven was right behind him.

Just when he reached the top, he looked down the hallway that had an expensive carpet laid out over it and saw a man who came running down in his direction.

It was Slade. A portly man with a black beard. So, he was the one, Edgar remembered him as Edgar looked to check the scarlett red moonstone he wore on his right hand.

“My lord, this is a members-only club, so we cannot have you entering the premises. Could I have you wait in the waiting room?”

So he means it would be troublesome to have me walking about.

“Then I will become a member. I should meet the requirements.”

“Yes, but, ah....”

He looked quizzically up at Edgar's face which hid under the shadow of the brim of his hat as if to check if he was the real one.

“Are you saying a dead man doesn't qualify?”

He took off his hat and grinned at him. The man wobbled back a few steps in shock, however tried to stand his ground and stopped.

“Yo-you do not look dead to my eyes.”

“That's right, your organization failed.”

“.....What are you talking about?”

“Where is Paul?”

“Please visit his residence.”

“He wasn't at the boarding house. The owner said another problem was that the housekeeper had also suddenly disappeared.”

“That is out of my knowledge...”

“Raven, Mister Slade appears to have bad blood flow from just staying up all night. You should help him wake up.”

Raven walked up to Slade and grabbed the scruff of his shirt and pointed a knife to forehead.

He saw in one glance that the knife was the one with poison on it that the housekeeper used and cold sweat seeped out of his forehead.

Edgar cruelly peered down at him as he was unable to move.

“Are you awake now?”

“.....”

“I can’t hear your reply. I think it wasn’t enough.”

“No, I-I’m awake.”

“Good.”

The club’s servants gathered around them from a far distance. From the look of their confused noise, it seemed like they weren’t members of the ‘Scarlett Moon.’

There weren’t that many members of the Robin Hood gang that they could identity.

The man urged the servants to return to their work posts.

“M-my lord, if we could please talk in the back,” spoke Slade in a rather high voice, signifying that he didn’t want Edgar to say anything unnecessary at this spot.

He lowered his voice and whispered into the man’s ear.

“I’m not interested in talking with you. I would prefer to annihilate every last one of you Scarlett Moon members, but as long as you have Paul, then there’s room for you to negotiate. I don’t imagine you have any intention of having him take the crime for killing an earl and throwing him into the Thames River.”

“.....We don’t just simply kill off our men just because they screwed up a job.”

As he finally admitted to it, he replied back sarcastically by comparing with Prince’s organization.

Only Edgar couldn’t have cared less. If he says that they’re different from Prince, then that was all the better.

Slade slowly stepped away from Raven's side who released his grip.

He guided Edgar and his servant to the back as they went on down winding hallways. The location must be a place where normal servants couldn't enter. Before they knew it, there was no body else around them.

Just then, in the corner of his vision, he thought he saw someone's figure move. Before Edgar could turn around, Raven pushed his shoulder.

In the next moment, the sound of gunfire overlapped with the sound of shattering sound of the nearby lamp shoot.

Slade took off.

"Catch them!"

At his shout, men of the 'Scarlett Moon' who were hiding jumped out from behind the doors one by one.

"Raven, this way!"

The both of them bolted to a run.

Paul should captured so that he wouldn't be witnessed and so hidden somewhere deep in this building.

Which means, that place should be around here, and so he checked the rooms here and there as they ran about.

But every room looked like it was unused.

Eventually, they came to the end of the hall where there was a large double door and they opened and went inside and locked the doors. Raven grabbed the decorative spear that was hanging on the wall to prop it up against the door so it looked like that would buy them some time.

The room turned out to be some gathering hall for the secret organization as it was a large, open hall.

From the high ceiling, there was a gothic chandelier hanging over above them. Right below it, there was a mosaic of a scarlett crescent moon painted on the floor.

Taking a closer look, the mosaic turned out to be made of red moonstones, and each one of the stones had blood-red colored alphabets inscribed onto them.

He wondered if they used this place for ceremonies for new entries in order to strength the fellowship between the members.

Most likely, they were moonstones that had the first alphabet of the member's names inscribed on the moonstones and like it was looking down at them, there was a more than evident throne that sat atop of an altar facing them.

There was a painting that hung on the wall behind the throne. Walking up to it, Edgar looked up to take a close look.

"The Blue Knight Earl.....?"

It was a portrait of a man with chestnut-colored hair and blue eyes like the sky and in his hand was the sword with the star sapphire in it.

Guessing from his clothes, he must be Julius Ashenbert who was said to have appeared in the palace of Elizabeth I.

There was no portrait painting in the Ashenbert house as far as Edgar knew. Even Tomkins, who had been keeping storage of all the possessions of the earl family had said there was no painting-like artifact left.

They came to the conclusion that since the family had such a strong bond between fairies, they wanted to avoid the danger of having a portrait that had their features stored on it to be used for cursing purposes.

Edgar wasn't an expert in that area, but in some areas of magic, he was told that there are spells that can harm the person if a curse was placed on their portrait.

Then, why did this earl have his portrait created. And why was it in a place like this.

In any case, this 'Scarlett Moon' worshiped the Blue Knight Earl and chose to go with the guardian fairy Flendolen's name, which was just as he expected.

Something slammed heavily against the door. The lock was bound to be broken through and the prop up spear was going to give out pretty soon.

"Lord Edgar, shall we go out through the ceiling window?"

"No, let's finish this here."

Just when he said that, the door was banged open.

Men came pouring into the chamber. From behind them, he could see Slade.

Beside Edgar, Raven made ready by pointing his pistol.

Slade realized that the pistol was aiming at his forehead without any hesitation and he stopped in his tracks.

Raven purposefully missed his mark and shot right by Slade's ear.

Slade let out a scream and all the men froze like time stopped.

"Yes, it's best you don't move. Because the first to move will be the first to die."

As he said that, Edgar took the opportunity to have a good look at each one of them.

"Now, gentlemen, you all are members of the 'Scarlett Moon'? If you say you all pledged a blood oath to the Blue Knight Earl, then that makes you all my slaves."

Purposefully, he took a glance at the portrait on the wall.

".....You mere imposter."

He heard Slade's whisper and walked over to him.

"But you all are imposters as well. A mere imitation of Flendolen."

Grabbing his arm, Edgar took off his ring roughly.

"This is a red moonstone, but a run-of-the-mill piece of work. It has a dull shine and I couldn't believe it once belonged to a fairy."

He carelessly threw it away.

"However, don't you all call yourselves by the guardian fairy of Lord Blue Knight and made a pledge of loyalty to the earl in this portrait? Well, yes, secret organizations like to make legendary figures like Paracelsus or Rosenkreutz as their founder. They differentiate and specialize their ceremonies and give a mysterious impression to society and make its members think that the bond they have as something noble and dignified but really is just a game, isn't that right?"

"We did not start this thinking it as a game? This is to protect ourselves and to fight."

"Then do you seriously intend to become the right-hand-man of the Blue Knight Earl? Of course, I would like to make sure if all of you are any good use."

Somewhere in the corner, someone moved.

Raven fired. His bullet knocked the man's gun out of his hand.

But that disrupted the tension that was straining everyone's nerves and another different man tried to attack and grab ahold of Edgar.

But he swiftly evaded his attack and quickly stepped back to make some

distance between them and took the bold step of jumping up onto the altar. He drew out the sword from its sheath that he had been holding in his hand. He held the silver-shining sword, which was exactly like the one that was painted in the portrait behind the altar straight up against it.

“I am the Blue Knight Earl. The master of this sword. If you don’t like it, then come and get me. That is, if you have the courage to face your weapon to this sword.”

As expected, everyone recoiled.

It was nothing for him to pretend like he was courageous and dignified even if he was surrounded by enemies. Since Edgar was well aware of his blessed beauty and how he appeared to other people’s eyes, he willingly used it.

“Hey, all of you, what are you doing! Get that sword away from the imposter!” Slade broke the silence.

Such a persistent man. Just when he was thinking if he should just make him permanently quiet, a familiar young man came running into the room.

“Everybody wait!”

Paul, who came running in up to the altar that Edgar was standing on, turned around to face his comrades.

“You all need to stop. This man isn’t the henchman of Prince. He’s the same as us, a victim.”

“Paul, even if your story is true, there’s no mistake that that man and that Asian was in the hands of Prince. There is a chance they could be brain-washed, and it would be different if they were positioned somewhere lower in the organization, it is unthinkable that someone who was stationed so close to that man would be able to move about freely. Those who escaped are tracked down and killed.”





It was exactly as he said. The reason Edgar wasn't killed, was because he was someone who needed to be captured alive for Prince.

He didn't know the reason why he wasn't killed. Prince killed off Edgar's comrades in order to corner him and had used all kinds of methods so far, but using his one weakness of not killing him, Edgar managed to escape this far.

"But, would Prince allow one of his men to win the name of Blue Knight Earl? Even if we accept it or not, this man is officially acknowledged by Her Majesty the Queen. Wouldn't someone like that just only be a hindrance to Prince?"

Slade tilted his head in silence as he must have been trying to think up of an objection.

"That part I would like to know as well. Is there some kind of history behind Prince and the Blue Knight Earl?"

Paul turned his head around slightly with a hesitant look, as if he was undecided if he could tell Edgar or not.

Slade only glared in his direction and remained quiet.

"Let's tell him."

The one who said that was another voice.

From the doorway, an old man came in. From how the members opened up a path for him, he must be one of the leading members.

He held his back straight up but he apparently was blind as he came walking up with a cane in his hand.

“Foreman...” said Slade in a worried tone.

Which means, this was the man who took in Paul as his son. It seems he wasn’t in Dover.

“Slade, could you leave this to me.”

It seems like the two of them were a much more friendly relationship than just a mere art dealer and painter.

“I’m terribly sorry for all the rudeness, my lord. No, should I call you your grace?”

“That name is no longer mine.”

“Then my lord, to tell you the truth we also don’t really know what the history is between Prince and the Blue Knight Earl. We only know that he uses all his power to completely obliterate the bloodline like he is afraid of the existence of the Blue Knight Earl.”

“The bloodline? But there hasn’t been one heir of the Ashenbert family who has appeared for the last three hundred years.”

“Yes, that is so, however, even if he didn’t have the right to succeed the earl title, there was one who descended from the earl.”

And then he looked up to the portrait.

“We believe that this is the only one that portrays the figures of the Blue Knight Earl family. The one who painted this was his lover and a woman who gave birth to his child...”

“I see, for the sake of his lover and child, he permitted her to paint his portrait. What a romantic story. So, the blood of the earl family was succeeded into that female painter’s family.”

“Yes. That was the family of our teacher that I and this Slade here went into as apprentices.”

So the art dealer originally had aimed to become a painter. Because he wasn’t able to sell his name, he must have gotten ahold of some kind of fortune and came up to his position.

“So, was the teacher of you two killed by Prince?”

With a painful face, he lowered his head as if he was mourning for the dead.

“Most of us are ones who were close with the clan of our killed teacher. Not only as painting acquaintances, but as artists from the old ages who had experience in decorative artworks like hanged paintings and sculptures. Long ago, our people had jobs that involved knowing the secrets about the lord of the family and his castle, and we became an organization from the necessity to protect ourselves and the clan of our teacher and their network was situated as our central force.”

“So that was the formation of the ‘Scarlett Moon’?”

“We were the ones who decided that we should go under the name of ‘Scarlett Moon.’ The clan of our teacher came to succeed the name of Flendolen as their middle name which was given to the child of the Blue Knight Earl and so we decided it as that. All of them were killed off, and the artist in the organizations were all separated, and these are all the ones who were could gather.”

“So in the end, you don’t know why they were targeted?” asked Edgar.

“We were unable to find out. Our teacher might have known, but our teacher was killed before the reason was revealed. We, who were left strengthened our bond of our hatred towards Prince and had been solely waiting for the return of the Blue Knight Earl to England. If Prince hates his family blood, then we thought that only by his appearance are we able to equally oppose him....”

“And yet it was an imposter, so you were disappointed?”

Foreman distorted his mouth in an ironical manner.

“Several years ago, when O’neill was killed, we grew suspicious of the duke family he was residing at and started to investigate about them. But we were only able to find out that there was just a fire, and never thought to think that the family’s young son was alive in the hands of Prince. My lord, if he, who had painted your family, was killed and your family was obliterated by Prince, then I would like to find out the reason. O’neill might have known something about the duke family.”

Why Edgar’s family was targeted. That was something that he himself had been trying to think of why.

However, there still was no exact answer. Only, more than that the duke family

was targeted, Edgar had the feeling like they were after Edgar himself.

“I don’t know myself. But, I don’t think that the Blue Knight Earl’s blood is related to that. My family tree was hammered into my brain ever since I was young, but there was no connection with the earl family who may or may not appear once in a hundred years.”

Foreman breathed in and let out a deep sigh.

There were so many things that were still a mystery.

To Prince’s organization which was obsessed in experimenting with magical elements, they may have seen the mysterious powers of the Blue Knight Earl as a menace.

There was that possibility. However Edgar didn’t have the mysterious power that was succeeded in the Ashenbert family.

But now, Edgar was the Blue Knight Earl. As long as he took up the name, he was aware that he was shouldering everything of the ancient family line.

Either way, he was unable to break away from the path of confronting with Prince.

“My lord, there is nothing more that I can speak of. I promise that you will not be caused any trouble from now on. Could you please not speak of our organization and leave this place?”

“So you’re saying that you don’t need an earl that doesn’t have the blood nor the godly power that can fight against Prince?”

But Edgar had no intention of leaving empty handed. This ‘Scarlett Moon’ should be useful.

That’s why he wanted it.

“Most likely, I am the one in Prince’s organization that knows about Prince more than anyone else. I know the methods he uses, the way he thinks and his underhanded, cruel attacks. That’s why I would know how to counteract that. Don’t you want a brain? I could bet that your operations are not that amazing enough that it makes Prince ignore you. That’s why your organization was able to survive this far, but are you satisfied with that?”

Slade made an offended expression probably because he himself must have been feeling impatient and irritated about that as well. Foreman didn’t change

his expression and continued to speak in an even-leveled tone.

“Are you saying we should have you join us?”

“You’re wrong, ‘Scarlett Moon’ gentlemen. I’m saying you should become mine.”

Edgar made an open-hearted smile and walked with long strides atop of the altar and went over to sit down on the throne that was the symbol of the organization prepared for the Blue Knight Earl.

There was a moment of bursting voices and commotion, but there was no one who spoke up in objection.

“In order to fight, I want to get my hands on the scarlet bow, Flendolen and the white bow, Glendolen. A fake scarlet bow for a fake earl. Goodness, if your group is just using the name of the fairy archer in liberty, then that should be fine. Don’t you feel like you might be able to win?”

There was no answer. But he felt the effect he made.

So, one more push.

Because they were a fake scarlet moon with just a name and enthusiasm, so that’s why they desired the real Blue Knight Earl.

However there was no meaning for them to do that. From the position of the real Blue Knight Earl, this ‘Scarlett Moon’ would always be a sham.

Even if they tried to shine like the real thing, they wouldn’t be able to be the same thing. If a fake was able to become the real thing, then it had to shine even brighter than the real one.

Edgar looked over to Paul’s direction.

“By the way, Paul, the reason I came to see you because I wanted you to return that white moonstone to me.”

Oh, gasped Paul in surprise and quickly took off the ring. Raven accepted that and handed it over to Edgar who was on the throne.

He then handed the sword to Raven and he stood up with the ring in his hand.

“Raven, I’ll leave the rest to you.”

“Yes.”

“Now, gentlemen, I’m going to go search for my white bow, Glendolen, so try to think about your decision carefully.”

He took a good look around all of them who didn't know what to do, and then Edgar called for Marygold and Sweetpea.

The 'Scarlett Moon' members couldn't contain their surprise at the sudden appearance of the two little girls who came out of nowhere, but if he didn't do that, then there was no point in doing this extravagant act.

"Then, my lord, let us make our way."

The two fairies in the form of young girls took Edgar's hand.

## Chapter 7 - A Promise with a Liar

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There was a milky-white moon that hanged against the light blue-violet sky that reminisced with a summersolstice night. The wind slowly breezed along the river surface and the forest tree leaves.

The fairy world was not hot nor cold, and quiet.

As Lydia looked up at the moon, she was thinking about what her father was doing around about now. She wondered if Edgar was told that Lydia wasn't able to work for the earl family anymore.

Since the fairy realm and the human realm went at different speeds of time, for Lydia, it may seem like night as even passed yet but most likely more time must have passed on the other side.

Feeling hungry with an empty stomach, Lydia looked down at the fruits that were on her lap.

The fruits in the fairy world were very ripe and released a sweet aroma. If one were to happen to take a bite out of one, then it was sure to be so delicious that you never had tasted before.

But if you were to put a food from the fairy realm into your mouth, then you would never be able to return to the human realm.

In the first place, since she decided to come and live with Kelpie, she needed to cut her ties with the human world, but since this was so sudden, she wasn't mentally prepared.

Closing her eyes, Lydia threw the fruits that Kelpie had picked for her far off in the distance. Just then, she saw him coming back from the direction of the river. He set down the pile of grass that he carried on his back onto the ground. He sat down Lydia onto the soft grass with its nice smell that was spread out like a blanket and grinned in satisfaction.

"Rest on this for today. Once we return to Scotland, I'll prepare everything so that it'll be comfortable to live even for a human."

"All right, thank you."

Surprisingly, he was kind and took care of her.

"Hey, Lydia, couldn't you take away the promise of the moon already?"

The promise that she made with him in the past that if he gave her the moon, then she'll marry him.

She made a promise with Kelpie that she would stay by his side when she accepted his blood that cured poison. That didn't connect to the promise of marriage, but since she was going to be with him for now-on, then there was no point in refusing the marriage, that's why he was saying that he wanted her to take away the promise of the moon.

"...Let's talk about that once we return to Scotland. I'm tired right now."

"Okay. Well, to you, it may not be that easy to adjust your feelings in order to cut off from the human world."

It wasn't words that was said to gloss things over. Kelpie didn't have such an underside nor have the ability to play cheap tricks. This was just his natural personality he was born with, so if Lydia was able to adopt a clear-cut mindset to spending her life with him, then she would probably be able to live peacefully.

When she lifted up her head, she saw that Kelpie had his eyes fixed onto her.

Even if he didn't have a bad character, he was still an Unseelie Court. He was a fairy that ate humans. It wasn't the erotic kind when Edgar looked at her but made her feel surrounded with a feeling like he wanted to take a bite out of her.

Then, he suddenly grabbed ahold of her shoulder and Lydia was pressed down atop of the grass.

"Wa-wait, what are you doing....!"

"Mating."

"Huhh?"

Oh, right, he had the instincts of an animal, that's why he has such a practical turn of mind.

Lydia silently grew furious and suddenly threw her fist up at Kelpie's nose.

"Ow...., what, I heard that humans don't struggle that wildly like female kelpies."



“We aren’t married yet!”

He tsked under his breath as he mumbled, damn, still not good and leaned away from Lydia.

Just then, there was an unnatural sound on the river’s water surface.

Kelpie seemed to be troubled by it as he stood up. At least for now, the area near the shore and river surroundings was the territory of Kelpie. Water horses hated intruders especially underwater.

“I’m going to go take a look.”

After he went and disappeared into the water, Lydia let out a deep sigh.

She became worried if she was going to be able to keep up with him.

“Lydia.”

She thought she heard Edgar’s voice, but she just thought she must be tired. After taking a rest and spending the night, she might be able to turn into a more up-beat mood.

“Lydia, hurry, let’s escape while we can.”

Huh?

When Lydia finally lifted her head at the sound of grass rustling right near her, she saw that Edgar was smiling happily at her.

“Wh-why on earth are you here?”

“I’m here to take you back home.”

“But.....”

“How horrible for you to leave as you please.”

“Hey, hurry up already! He’s going to come back!”

Nico was beckoning for them with his hand from the shadows of the grass.

Edgar pulled on Lydia’s arm as she still didn’t know what to do and the both of them started off in a run.

“Wait, I can’t run off like this. I promised with Kelpie....”

“But, you fought courageously when your chastity was in danger.”

“Yo-you were watching-?”

“I nearly rushed out. Since Nico threw a frog into the river, we were able to turn Kelpie’s attention away.”

So it looked like they were trying to get away from Kelpie’s territory as Edgar

hurried her through the forest at a fast pace. The reason he didn't loosen his grip on Lydia's arm was because he might have been frightened that she might say that she wanted to return to Kelpie's side.

"Lydia, it isn't like you really want to marry that fairy who knows not one bit of the delicate workings of a woman's mind?"

That wasn't a problem at this point.

Their promise was formed already, so what Edgar was trying to do was rash and pointless.

"This is the fairy world. This isn't a world where you can use your lies and bluffs. You can't break the promise that you made."

"Did you think that I would just say I thought so after I found out that you saved me? In that case, it was your biggest miscalculation," he said it in a somewhat angry tone.

"And besides, you said that you would try to fall in love with me, so that itself is breaking a promise."

"I didn't say so, I just said that I will think about it."

"Then I don't want you to just disappear without thinking about it."

But that, even if she thought about it, she had already made the promise with Kelpie.

More than that, she gazed up at the side of his face wondering how on earth he was able to come into the fairy realm.

Nico shouldn't have had the ability to do that.

Not only did he come onto this side, but he must have not quite grasped the idea that his knowledge and experience was no match with this world as he kept on running with his usual confident expression.

"Hey, it's those two. Hide!" Nico suddenly let out a shout.

Edgar pulled Lydia into his arms like he was cradling her and hid themselves behind a tree.

There were two faint floating lights that came flying through the forest.

They were calling out Edgar's name.

"Oh, my goodness, were you brought here by those two fairies?"

Quiet, whispered Edgar as he put a finger to his lips.

“.....Which means, did you perhaps accept the marriage proposal.”

“Well, those girls might be under the misunderstanding of something like that.”

“I-it isn’t misunderstanding! There isn’t any promise that can be made under a misunderstanding! Didn’t you accept the moonstone from Paul?”

“Yup, this.”

He took out the ring from the chief pocket of his coat which made Lydia feel dizzy.

Even though he accepted the ring and was guided into the fairy world, he escaped from the eyes of those two female fairies and used Nico as his guide and searched for Lydia.

What an unbelievable thing he was trying to do.

In this situation, it wasn’t going to settle all the problems with just her calming Kelpie down and sending Edgar back to the human realm.

“.....And after your life was just saved..... You aren’t a person who could find happiness in the fairyworld, could you? Don’t you feel satisfaction in testing your powers in the human world? For people who have that kind of soul, this side is just like the underworld for them!”

“Hey, Lydia, you’ll make us be found out.”

Nico was turning frantic and pulled on her hair but Lydia wasn’t able to stop herself.

“How stupid of you, if you accepted this, then you’re only left with the option of marrying the Queen. There’s nothing that even I can do.”

The two fairies must have noticed Lydia’s voice as they remained floating and glimmering in the air.

“Is there someone there?”asked one of them.

Finally, Lydia realized that they would be in trouble if they were found. She lowered her voice to a whisper.

“Oh, no...., hey, Nico, isn’t there another way?”

“Like I already said to the earl, there’s nothing I can do.”

“Oh, no Lydia, there’s something you can do to save me,” said Edgar in an especially confident way.

“Please marry me.”

“What?”

“As I was hovering over the two courses of life and death, I saw the dream of searching for you. In the future, when I would be visited by death once again, I’m sure that I’ll look for you. That’s why I want you to be by my side forever.”

He held Lydia’s hands in his and said it in a serious tone, but there was no possibility that this act of his was serious.

But, there might be a one in a hundred that he might be serious, so it confused her.

If it was a courting approach from Kelpie, then she would be able to drive him away with one punch but for some odd reason, she wasn’t able to smartly evade it when it was Edgar.

“Our classes are different.”

The thing that popped out of her mouth was something that was meaningless in a situation like this.

“Compared to marrying to a fairy, I don’t think it’s that big of a deal.”

“Anyways, don’t say something so stupid.”

“So it’s stupid. So stupid that you’ll agree to marry if I can give you the moon?”

“Yes, if it’s the real moon.”

“Nico, you heard her.”

“Eh, ah, yeah....”

“Lydia, this is the moon. The real one.”

He held out the moonstone that was the cause of their problems.

“Hold on a moment, this isn’t the moon,” retorted Lydia.

“It’s the moon. As long as you accept it as it.”

“.....What do you mean?”

“The Blue Knight Earl from the past didn’t say ‘if you would give me the moon’ but said the promise will be fulfilled with they‘exchanged an oath with the moon.’ That’s why, you don’t just accept it but need to put it on and consider it as the symbol of your oath. But, it happens to be, that Lydia, I haven’t wore this ring on my finger even once.”

In other words, the engagement between Edgar and the Queen wasn’t completely fulfilled at this point.

If Lydia were to accept Edgar's proposal and wore the moonstone on her finger, then could that mean that instead of accepting the 'moon' from the earl, she had exchanged an oath of marriage?

If the official fiancée who exchanged the 'moon' with the 'oath' was Lydia.

At the same time, that would mean that Lydia wouldn't be able to marry Kelpie who she still had the 'moon' promise she made with.

The moon field queen and Kelpie proposed to Edgar and Lydia with the preassumption that this moonstone was the 'moon.' That must in turn be the power that sealed them.

"My lord, oh, so there you were!" cried out one of the female fairies.

It seems they were found.

The field fairies came floating over to them.

"Lydia, would you please accept."

Edgar tried to hurry her.

So, that's what this is about.

Lydia finally was able to understand the meaning why Edgar suddenly brought up this marriage.

For him, this marriage was a method that would allow him to win back his fairy doctor and help him get through this situation.

Then, she couldn't accept it all the more.

If it was to keep the girl that was useful to him by his side, then he must think that marrying her to do that would be not that big of deal.

If it was Edgar, then it was possible. But, she would never be able to accept such a marriage.

".....It isn't you. You aren't in love with me."

"Is what I say that unbelievable for you?"

She wondered why she was being so stiff about. She thought she was prepared to marry a water horse which were said to be devilishly enchanting, and yet, Edgar who was a human, whether or not he was in love or not, was the better choice as a marriage partner for Lydia if she thought about it normally.

And yet, as she was appalled, Lydia was unable to nod her head in response.

Even Kelpie didn't have the feelings of adoration and falling in love like a

human. But if it was him, then she could imagine that he would treat her with feelings that never changed.

On the other hand, she had no idea what was going on in Edgar's heart.

There could be so many other women who were qualified for him, and on top of that he was just all talk and a liar.

"I can't trust you."

He fell silent like he was trying to think of something.

Since he didn't show any signs of pain from Lydia's rejection, then this was indeed just a strategy for him.

"All right. If you're saying that you aren't able to feel inclined to marry with me at this point, then you could just think of it as a ride to get out of this situation."

"A ride out of this situation? So that's your true intentions."

"No. I'm saying that if since I don't have time right now to convince you is all."

"My lord, let us please hurry on our way. To Our Majesty The Highness."

The two fairies were circling around Edgar but he didn't let go of Lydia.

"Hey, you two, what is the meaning of this!"

At that voice, the two female fairies quickly flew away from Edgar as if to escape.

"Ahhhh, it's the barbaric kelpie!"

They were finally found by Kelpie as well.

When Lydia slowly turned around, he was boldly standing in his horse form and aimed his enchanting magical eyes fixed onto Edgar.

"My lord, quickly this way!"

As the two little fairies continued to make a commotion, they weren't able to get near Edgar because of Kelpie.

As Edgar glared back at Kelpie, he pulled Lydia further into his arms.

"Blue Knight Earl, you're such a persistent man. She's my bride."

"You're wrong, Lydia is going to marry me."

"What nerve you have. Do you want to be eaten that badly."

As Edgar backed away with Lydia in his arms, he whispered:

"Lydia, please, I beg of you, let's just go home. Promises between humans can

be easily forgotten like they never existed.”

She was dubious about her favor in that.

However, even if it was a lie, as long as she pretended to accept the marriage with Edgar, then Lydia would be able to return to the human world.

And she would be able to prevent him from being taken away to the field fairy queen’s land.

But there was also another concern that she had left behind in the human world.

“You don’t know how depressed Professor Carlton was after you disappeared.”

Edgar finally brought out his winning card that Lydia was trying not to think about.

I’m sure this is part of his calculation.

But once she remembered about her father, then that swayed Lydia’s heart dramatically.

For Lydia who thought that marriage was a long ways away from her in the future, it was her honest feelings that she wanted to remain as the daughter of her father for a little while longer.

How mean of him. However, knowing that Lydia wouldn’t be able to let go of Edgar’s hand that was connected to her father, Edgar made a fearless, winning smile.

“All right, Edgar. Please give me the ‘moon’...”

“Thank you. I’ll treasure for the rest of my life.”

A promise just for this situation. Even if she knew that, Edgar said it in such a serious tone, that it made her heart unexpectedly beat faster.

He quickly held up Lydia’s left hand. She watched as the moonstone ring was slipped onto her ring finger which made her have a surprisingly giddy feeling.

“Hey, Lydia.”

She turned around to Kelpie who shouted out to her after he realized about the ‘moon’ ring.

“I’m sorry, Kelpie. I still have an attachment to the human world.”

More than in rage, he frowned with a sad expression.

At least, he didn’t seem like he was going to attack Edgar or use his strength to

do something about this situation.

The two female fairies also looked confused but stayed away in the distance.

“I’m sorry, little fairies. Please accept my decision and give up on me.”

“My lord, then please make a heir as soon as you can.”

“Did you hear, Lydia.”

“Don’t get carried away.”

“I’m going to open the way home,” shouted Nico and jumped up onto Lydia’s shoulder.



She felt like the landscape around her warped in distortion but that was just an instant when they passed through the small opening of the fairy world and the human world.

In that small passageway, Lydia heard Kelpie’s voice.

“I’ll wait until you don’t have any attachments. That’s sure to be in no time.”

That’s true. From the point of fairies, twenty or thirty years goes by like a blink of an eye.



So then, the peaceful daily life at the Ashenbert house returned.



Or it should have.

“Excuse me, Edgar, but what is the meaning of this?”

Lydia rushed into the lord of the house’s gentleman’s room and walked over to Edgar, who was unusually doing his duty of working on taking care of his estates.

“Oh, Lydia, hello, I missed you so much.”

“I heard you’re planning on entering the charity robbery group that went after your life? Nico told me. Just because they desire savory from the mysterious power of the Blue Knight Earl, you used Marygold and Sweetpea’s magic so that they would accept you as their earl, didn’t you?”

“It looks like I have some time that opened up tonight. I was just thinking of inviting you to dinner.”

“Don’t change the subject. Why is that? Are you joining forces in order to avenge yourselves against Prince? Are you going to put your hands in crimes again?”

He shrugged his shoulders and set down his pen and looked straight into Lydia’s eyes as she seriously questioned him.

“I have no intention of joining their organization.”

“...Oh, good then,”

“I became its leader.”

“Whhaat?!”

Leader? Of a robin hood gang?

“Because they originally wanted a leader like the Blue Knight Earl. And besides, they and I both are in a position where we have to protect ourselves from Prince. So that’s just the reason why we decided to help each other.”

Protect themselves? If Edgar intended to head the organization as its leader, then he wouldn’t settle quietly with just protecting himself.

However, Edgar just softly smiled back at Lydia.

“Thanks to you, I was able to not lose Paul. He looked at me with the same eyes as before, even though I’ve changed this much. ....Unless you didn’t tell me that Paul had remembered and considered our promise special, then I don’t know if I was able to bet on the option of talking with him.”

“That’s because you were able to discover his talent in art. It’s means there was a strong bond between the two of you since then. It isn’t thanks to me.”

“It isn’t that much of a big deal like discovering talent, or anything like that.”

“But, didn’t you recommend to Paul to become a painter?”

“Well, yes. At the time, he apparently wanted to become a poet, but when he showed me his work, it was so terrible. His paintings were horrible, but if someone were to buy them and hang them in their house, they would still have the fun of entertaining the guests, right? But with poems, it wouldn’t make any money unless society accepted and praised them.”

“.....”

“Honestly, I was surprised at this growth.”

This man, maybe his personality hasn’t changed at all from the past?

However, even though he wasn’t any good, at least he thought of buying the man’s paintings, so that should mean that he has some compassion for the man.

I really can’t understand Edgar.

In the end, however Lydia thought about it, it was definite for him to become the leader of the secret organization and exact his revenge on Prince.

If that happens, Edgar wouldn’t be able to rest in peace unless things went his way.

That was the only part about him that she was definitely sure about.

“So, you would of course accept my invitation to dinner, wouldn’t you?”

“Sorry, but Father is coming home early tonight.”

“Then we can have the Professor come along as well.”

There was no way her father would come just because of the obvious fact that he was invited since Lydia was worried about him.

Edgar was well aware and yet he said that, because he knew that whatever Lydia were to say, he would be able to have her take a seat with him at dinner. Because she witnessed him when he was so weak in bed, she had forgotten that he was this kind of person.

I wonder if it was all right like this. She worried about herself who was back by his side.

"You're not going to wear the ring," he said as he drew his attention towards Lydia's fingertips like he just remembered.

".....The size isn't right."

And besides, it would be strange for her to always wear it.

"Then it can just be fixed."

"It's all right, anyways, as long as I have it, it'll will prevent the fairies from meddling with us."

Edgar rested his cheek into the palm of his hand as he looked at Lydia with a somewhat dissatisfied expression.

She suddenly felt an awkward sense of uneasiness. Lydia had came marching into here, furious about him becoming a member of a secret organization, but there was no meaning in questioning him.

She was unsure of why she came here.

"So, I'll be leaving now,"

However, when she tried to go, she was called back.

"Near the end of this week, I was thinking of visiting your family residence, so would you think the Professor would be there?"

"Huh, .....why?"

"It would be the polite thing to do to properly ask for his permission to marry."

Huuhh?

"What are you talking about? Wa----wasn't that just to get through that situation?"

Edgar tilted his head in a purposeful manner.

"But you had definitely accepted my marriage proposal and accepted the engagement ring."

"But that was because you said it was just a promise between you and me! You said that promises between people are able to forgotten anytime."

"I don't recall saying something like that."

"Ar-are you planning on forgetting that part!"

Lydia became so furious that it was starting to make her dizzy.

"So, about the weekend," he continued on with the conversation with a composed attitude.

“N-no, you can’t! Don’t you dare come to my house.”

“Now I can’t let that happen.”

“Please, don’t tell Father!”

Lydia was in a panic. If her father was told about marriage from Edgar, he was sure to fall sick into bed.

He was so overjoyed that his daughter, who had supposedly gone off to the fairy realm but came back, that he nearly lost control of himself.

At the time, her father was quite drunk, so he must have been drinking in order to forget about his sorrows.

He was old enough to know better, and on top of that he was an university professor, and yet he was bawling fountains of tears and cried to her to never go off to marry. Lydia had just replied that she wasn’t going to go anywhere.

“It isn’t right to court in secret.”

“We aren’t courting!”

“Now, listen, Lydia. A close relationship will be evident to people who know one when they see it. A class difference will especially draw weird speculation. Before it turns to people’s rumors, we need to make it public that we are in a proper and acceptable courtship, or else people will think that I am playing around with you.”

“Then we just don’t have to be in a close relationship!”

“There won’t be any damage to me no matter what kind of rumors there may be, but for you, it will be a matter of dignity and reputation.”

Lydia’s counterargument wasn’t being listened to at all.

Well, it was indeed as he said, that if they were to really court one another, then there was nothing that Lydia could profit from by hiding it.

For a daughter from a proper family, there was no such thing as a courtship that didn’t lead to marriage.

But if this was made public, then that would mean she was left to marriage this scoundrel.

“First of all, I think the start of this all was the problem. You are well aware, that I have no intention of marrying someone like you.....”

He suddenly stood up and covered her mouth with his hand.

“Wouldn’t it be bad if you said that?”

She followed where Edgar took a suggestive glance towards, which was outside the window, where she saw a black horse taking a rest on its side by the fountain in the garden.

Why in the world is Kelpie here?

“He apparently is going to wait here in London until you change your mind.”

Which means, she couldn’t allow herself to speak out loud and claim that this engagement is a sham which will be just as Edgar had planned?

“There is no way that you are seriously considering this marriage.

Edgar lifted up Lydia’s chin with his fingertips and grinned at her.

“Are you still saying such things? Then in order for you to understand how serious I am, I’ll have to exert myself and work harder.”

Is he declaring his flirtatious attacks on her?

Edgar, who had apparently tried to get his hands on the ‘Scarlet Moon,’ must want to show off his ties with the fairies in order for them to realize him as the Blue Knight Earl.

And for him to continue to be the Blue Knight Earl who is blessed with the bond with fairies, Lydia was an indispensable person to him.

Just like she should have known, he was a complete villain.

If it was to keep Lydia by his side, he intended to use any means possible.

“I still have work to do.....”

Lydia was only able to escape from that situation, but of course that night, there wasn’t any possible way for her to refuse the invitation to dinner and was going to end up having to listen to his sweet, melting words that he had plenty to say to her.

# Credits

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